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AN EMERGING CHRISTIAN FAITH

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AN EMERGING CHRISTIAN FAITH

by

JUSTIN WROE NIXON

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1930

AN
EMERGING
CHRISTIAN
* FAITH *
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THE UNITED
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* FIRST *
EDITION

C-E

TO
MY MOTHER
AND TO THE
MEMORY OF MY FATHER

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AN EMERGING
CHRISTIAN FAITH

INTRODUCTION

The Christian religion needs a new house of faith. The scheme of thought which has constituted the framework of Christian preaching for centuries has been rendered obsolete by the advance of the modern world. And we cannot get along without ideas. "In the last analysis there is nothing that is practically important at all except our ideas, our group of concepts about the nature of the world and our place in it, for out of these springs all our conduct."[1] In this conviction Professor Millikan, speaking of science, agrees with Dr. George A. Gordon, speaking of religion. Of the old New England preachers and their intellectual system Dr. Gordon declares: "The character both of the preacher and of the people rose up out of the high philosophy which they together held concerning man and man's world."[2]

The Christian Church must essay the task of developing once more a "high philosophy" of religion and life—a philosophy which in both its intellectual strength and its spiritual dignity will be comparable to that of the Alexandrian thinkers in the third century, of Augustine in the fifth, of Thomas Aquinas in the thirteenth, and of Calvin in the sixteenth. Since Calvin's day the issues of religion have changed profoundly, but the Church as a whole has shrunk from accepting the challenge to a radical reconstruction of its system of thought.

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[1] Millikan, Robert A., *Science,* May 10, 1929, p. 485.

[2] Gordon, *Ultimate Conceptions of Faith,* p. viii.

The reasons for this hesitation on the part of the Church are various. All institutions are conservative, especially institutions like the Church, which man has endowed with the most precious substance of his hopes. The Church, moreover, has become a vast and prosperous vested interest, and to prosperous vested interests reform is a work of supererogation. In its appeal to certain classes the Church has discovered that it gets along more comfortably when it is content to function as a way of escape from the stubborn facts of life, and that for such a purpose antiquarianism of thought and ritual is an asset rather than a liability. The very rapidity, also, of the social and intellectual changes characteristic of our time has deterred religion from the effort at reconstruction. Influential philosophies become possible only upon an agreed basis of fact, and in our modern course of development it has been difficult to distinguish facts from the speculations which cluster about them.

But the Christian Church can hardly avoid a really consistent effort to reconstruct its thinking much longer. The new intellectual culture based on science challenges the inherited thought system of the Church as the Greek culture challenged the Messianic philosophy of history with which Christianity emerged from the pale of Judaism. To disengage the permanent spiritual values of Greek culture and to put them at the disposal of Christianity was the task of the great Christian thinkers of the first three centuries. To disengage the permanent spiritual values of our scientific culture from their envelopments of sheer paganism and to put those values at the disposal of a growing religion is the task of Christian thinkers today.

There are signs that the shock of the World War, revealing the colossal possibilities of destruction latent in the machine, is having a catalytic effect upon the minds of thoughtful religious men similar to the effect of the barbarian invasions in the fifth century upon the mind of Augustine. A new philosophy, that of the organic view of the world, awaits assimilation by religion today as the philosophy of Aristotle awaited assimilation by the religious mind of the Middle Ages. Finally, the intimacies of world contact necessitating a new international order to direct the energies and control the intercourse of the peoples will probably prove as stimulating to the development of modern religion as nationalism was to the development of the Reformation faiths. The new culture of science, our threatened barbarization by the machine, the new organic philosophy, and the new compulsions of international intimacy create a situation which will not leave the thought of the Church alone.

With the best of intentions, however, intelligent religious men find their way into this situation only with difficulty. The difficulty is that the sentiments which they carry along in their souls, the product of their religious past, are estranged from the ideas which have been generated by the contact of their minds with these new conditions of the modern world of which we have been speaking. The result is that some escape from the dilemma by taking a straight header into the bosom of some system of ecclesiastical authority. Others stifle the voice of their religious aspirations, and take their stand upon the foundations of objective fact even though it enables them to build only a philosophy of "unyielding despair."

It is the conviction of the writer that neither of these attitudes will permanently satisfy human nature and that both the sentiments associated with historic Christianity and the facts of modernity will be found at home within a religious view of the world that is far richer in content than we have imagined.

But what is the way into such a view? We have no royal road to propose. But if the spiritual reality which such a view will make more available is a "whole," then it is probable that men will find their way into it only as they see their religion and their life as a whole. No specialized study of fragments of religion will suffice. No shivering of our existence into bits for scientific analysis will disclose the secret. Nothing less than a venture upon thoughtful religion in the entire dedication of one's soul with all its apparently irreconcilable interests will open the way to those insights which we crave. Today as well as yesterday it is true that "ye shall seek me and find me when ye shall search for me with all your heart."

This process means to the inductive mind a vast deal of individual experimentation and testimony. The new house of faith will not suddenly appear through the magical offices of some encyclopedic thinker rubbing the Aladdin's lamp of philosophic speculation. The facts significant for religious thought are too numerous, the changes in those facts too frequent, the processes for testing the facts in experience too varied, for any one individual now to essay the rôle of an Aquinas.

If we should seek an historical analogy for our present situation we should probably find that the work of the Dominicans with their nunneries on the upper Rhine during the later Middle Ages had a deeper lesson for us than the achievements of any single theologian. Professor Coulton calls our attention in this connection to two important facts. First, that the Dominicans in instructing their nuns had to translate the tradition of the Church out of Latin into the vernacular to make it communicable: and more important still, that in this process of communication the nuns modified the tradition in the direction of experiential reality. Out of the teaching of many obscure *docti fratres* and out of the experience of many humble nuns there finally emerged the mystical theology which was such an important factor in the development of Luther and other reformers.[3]

In some such fashion a vital religious view of the world which will express the convictions of modern men and women will probably appear.

Here a bit of scientific truth will be translated into terms of religious experience, and here another. Here a novel pattern of religious outlook will appear, and here another. Tomorrow fragments of various patterns combined with new facts from various intellectual specialties will be found all combined in a new general view. This in turn after testing will give up its living elements to another synthesis.

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[3] Coulton, *Christ, St. Francis, and Today,* pp. 2-4.

The alembic into which all facts must go and from which all useful views of life must emerge will always be the personal experience of men in their struggle with fate. If the modern world is to be saved it will be saved in no aristocratic manner by either scholars or philosophers, any more than in the past it has been saved by ecclesiastics. It will be saved only as a sufficient number of individuals with varying backgrounds find their thought and their experience interpenetrating, as they seek a view of the world which will unite the race's inheritance in religion with the facts and methods made available by science.

Such a view of the world, representing an ever incomplete fusion of sentiments and knowledge, may be easy to hit. But like the fire-control tower of a modern warship composed of woven cables, such a view constituted of many strands, and these the tough fibers of personal experience, will show an amazing resistance to demolition by the weapons of mere logical analysis.

It is because of the author's conviction that the realization of such a view of the world is an eminently democratic process to be participated in by all who seek wholeness of life, that he has ventured to put down here some of the basic elements in his own religious outlook. He has written these pages, in intervals of time taken from his work as a parish minister, largely to meet the needs of his own soul. In his contacts with thoughtful men and women of his own age and with youth he has had to face certain fundamental questions. The first of these is the question, "Why are we so confused in our religious thinking when our fathers were so sure?" It is an inquiry as to the forces which are producing a new religious outlook. The second question might be phrased, "Why worry about any religious belief at all?" It is the question of the validity and relevance of religion in our day. The third question is, "What shall I believe—what might be the positive content of a modern Christian faith?" The final question grows out of those already mentioned. It is the question, "Can a positive and worthy faith survive in our mechanized civilization?"

As these questions have been put to him, the author has realized that they were at bottom his own personal questions about religion. He himself had moods when he sought to probe the sources of his own confusion, when he wondered whether religion was outgrown, whether a positive faith could be reasonable, and whether a reasonable and inspiring faith could thrive in our machine culture. So he set himself to answer his own questions. His attempt to answer them against the background of his own religious experience and the changing thought of the time will be found in the pages of this book.

J. W. N.

One main factor in the upward trend of animal life has been the power of wandering. Perhaps this is why the armour-plated monsters fared so badly. They could not wander. Animals wander into new conditions. They have to adapt themselves or die. . . . When man ceases to wander, he will cease to ascend in the scale of being.

The very benefit of wandering is that it is dangerous and needs skill to avert evils. We must expect, therefore, that the future will disclose dangers. It is the business of the future to be dangerous; and it is among the merits of science that it equips the future for its duties. . . .

In the immediate future there will be less security than in the immediate past, less stability. It must be admitted that there is a degree of instability which is inconsistent with civilization. But on the whole, the great ages have been unstable ages.

—WHITEHEAD, *Science and the Modern World*, pp. 290-291.

Chapter One

THE BREAK-UP OF A GREAT TRADITION

I

I am thinking today of a boy who forty years ago was growing up in a minister's home. From the conversation in that home and from what he heard in church he learned that there was a place called heaven. No one knew exactly where it was except that it was up. There was also a place called hell, and no one knew where that was except that it was down. "He descended into hell, he ascended into heaven" was the language of the creed. Heaven was the place where good people went when they died, as hell was the final abode of the wicked.

For several years following infancy these mysterious places did not mean much to the boy; in fact, they meant hardly anything at all until one evening out in the cow-pasture his cousin, a girl a little older than himself, had a talk with him. She had recently been converted, so she said, and had joined the church. It was very important to be converted, she told the boy, because by being converted one would be sure to go to heaven when he died. "And where would you go," she said, "if you died tonight? You would go to hell." That worried the boy, and from the time of the conversation in the cow-pasture, hell was a more serious reality to him.

He learned from his father that being converted, as his cousin had been, involved "repentance" and "trust in Christ." "Trust in Christ" did not seem to involve great difficulties, but "repentance" was another matter. Repentance meant that one felt sorry for all the wrong things he had done and that he resolved not to do them any more. The trouble was that many so-called wrong things had already proven quite interesting to the boy and it appeared that if he repented he would be likely to miss some of the more attractive experiences of this life. The boy thought that the thief on the cross who repented at the last minute had acted very cleverly. The thief had doubtless led a care-free existence and had thus enjoyed the pleasures of this world, then at the end he had made sure of the desirable things in the world to come.

The boy planned to follow the example of the thief and repent just before he died. But a neighborhood revival broke up the plan. Over in the Methodist church people were being converted in large numbers. They went up to the altar in front of the pulpit and knelt in prayer and there conversion took place. The boy's schoolmates were being converted. When they arose from the altar with smiles on their faces, members of the congregation went forward and congratulated them. The boy was seized with a great desire to be converted and so he went up to the altar and waited for something to happen. The worker who talked to him told him in the words of his father to "repent and trust in Christ." The boy repented of all the sins a child of nine could have committed. He also endeavored to trust in Christ, so far as he understood what that meant.

There were other elements in the religious view of the world which this boy inherited besides the belief in heaven and hell—the repentance which committed one in theory at least to a rather serious life and the trust in Christ which insured a desirable destiny at the end. The boy opened the Bible which had been given him when he joined the church and he discovered that the world had been created in the year 4004 B.C. That date was in the margin of the page alongside the first verse of the first chapter of *Genesis*. The terminus *a quo* of human history lay, accordingly, about 6,000 years back. The terminus *ad quem* was marked by the second coming of the

Lord, who would appear in the air riding on the clouds, and would then proceed to wind everything up. There was the span of man's existence upon the planet, from 4004 B.C. until the Lord's second coming, which many thought to be imminent.

The boy's ideas of God were vague beyond the fact that God was the one who could send us to the "bad place" or receive us into heaven. Jesus was a kind and gentle person who did wonderful deeds and helped people in need. He had come down from his home in heaven to save us from hell. The missionaries who went to foreign lands—and the boy's mother was very much interested in the missionaries—went there to tell the people about Jesus so they would not be lost and go to hell.

Such were some of the more important materials which entered in childhood into the making of this boy's house of faith. As he passed into youth some of these materials broke up and crumbled away, while others were added. The boy does not recall that hell meant anything to him after the beginning of adolescence. He took his interpretation of the Creation from Huxley rather than from the volumes of Hodge's *Theology* which he found in his father's library. Jesus, on the other hand, became a far more dynamic person, a help in temptation, rather than a guarantor of future blessedness. During long summer vacations, which through his college course were spent away from home, the boy discovered the Bible and especially the letters of Paul as an incomparable source of guidance and courage. To a college senior interested in public affairs and the study of law Peabody's *Jesus Christ and the Social Question* brought the pregnant suggestion that the primary need of man was ethical rather than economic, and that the answer to that need lay in the keeping of religion rather than of politics. In student conferences, under the influence of such leaders as John R. Mott and Robert E. Speer, the youth caught a glimpse of a world transformed by the ideals and personality of Christ. From the spell of a religion with such goals and resources he had no desire to escape, and he entered upon the vocation of a Christian minister as the door to life's greatest adventure.

II

We need hardly suggest that the writer has been describing in autobiographical form an experience of which many of his own generation have intimate personal knowledge. It has been an experience of growing up under the shelter of a great religious tradition and of finding oneself in maturity with a precious inheritance of purpose and sentiment derived from that tradition, but with one's sense of the present pertinence of the tradition greatly modified by the changes of the years.

It has sometimes seemed that the experience of our generation has recapitulated to an extraordinary degree the development of Christian belief since the close of the Middle Ages. As a result of the cultural lag which affects the Church and other conservative social institutions we grew up centuries after the work of Copernicus and Galileo with the idea of a heaven that was up and of a hell that was down. The astronomers had long since set heaven and hell adrift somewhere in space and had allowed the earth to continue its existence merely as a speck of dust in the constellation of Vega, a tiny area of a universe millions of light years across, but sermons as well as hymns and creeds knew little of what had occurred. The dates of Usher's chronology, moreover, continued to appear in the margins of Genesis, as if Darwin had never written *The Origin of Species* or Lyell *The Antiquity of Man.*

It was the growing application of the historical method to the study of the Bible in the latter part of the nineteenth century which made it possible for the Copernican and Darwinian revolutions to register their long-delayed effects upon the Christian house of faith. Under the assaults of critical methods which were accepted everywhere else in the field of history the wall of Biblical infallibility which had hitherto protected that house from cosmic weather and the flood of evolutionary theory began to collapse. Inherited conceptions such as those concerning hell, the second coming, the mysterious potency of the sacraments, and even the virgin birth were traced to non-Christian origins. Psychology came along to reinforce history in impugning the value of evangelical ideas of sin and repentance. Comparative religion told of other faiths besides Christianity which had their special revelations, their inspired books, their miracles, saviors, and salvations. The Christian tradition began to be fitted into the background of man's religious history.

Until the writer's graduation from the seminary, twenty years ago, most of the occupants of the old house of faith seemed to think that all it needed was patching. Lengthen the days of *Genesis* and transmute its history into poetry; let evolution have man's body if God can keep his soul; let the Bible be fallible, but the record of an inspired activity; let the miracles be dismissed, but keep intact the great doctrines centering in the Incarnation—such were the compromises by which men sought to repair the breaches in the house where the winds of modernity were whistling through.

It is now apparent that as far as maintaining the traditional house of faith is concerned these compromises have been in vain. They have made the old house intellectually tolerable for those who were attached to it by sentiment. But a younger generation is upon the scene which does not share our emotional concern for the Christian tradition and which demands a more thoroughgoing attack upon the whole problem. It would pass every element of our tradition in review, even the question of the value of religion itself. Nothing is more certain than that the younger generation is going to have its way and its imminent triumph brings the Church to one of the most fateful moments in its long career.

III

The fateful element in the situation is embodied in the question, "Can the Church create, absorb, or tolerate a new religious mind?" These young people are impatient of old categories. Like the ancient Greeks, they want to start straight from nature and build up a framework of religious thought on the basis of present experience. Can the Church coöperate with them in such a quest?

The answer is not easy. The Church has indeed tolerated and worked through many religious minds in the past. It found its origin in the apocalyptic mind of Judaism. It absorbed the mystic and sacramental mind of Hellenism. It made terms with the feudal mind of the Middle Ages. It has largely accommodated itself to both nationalism and democracy. It now faces the new knowledge and the new habits of life of the modern world. Can it make terms with them? Or have we reached in the history of the Church one of those stages which the biologists tell us is characteristic of the creative activity of nature? The method of nature seems to be to take a type and continuously modify it in the course of evolutionary change up to a certain point. Then in order to go further nature seems to be compelled to design a new type-structure, and on the basis of this in turn she develops a new series of modifications.

The Christian Church as a type of religious structure has shown itself wonderfully plastic to the influence of the various environments of its history. To these environments it has adjusted itself and lived. But can it make the drastic adjustments necessary to its continued life and development in our world today? Or has it reached the limits of its capacity for modification and must the Spiritual Power which directs the destinies of mankind start again with a type of religious life less specialized than that of organized Christianity?

This is the fateful issue which is involved in the demand of the younger generation that we start from experience and seek the development of a new religious mind.

The results of such a quest no one can foresee. Everything will depend upon the nature of the new intellectual outlook, the pressure of social forces, and the latent plasticity of the Church. The Church has modified its thinking profoundly through the ages, but it has not been able to absorb every type of thought. It took over much of the philosophy of Hellenism, but Gnosticism it rejected. It found a place for demonology, but not for the heresy of Mani. It has liberalized its theology in many particulars, but many liberalisms have proven sterile and abortive.

Those who wish to coöperate with the younger generation in the development of a new religious mind need expect no exemption from this historic process of trial and error. Only experience can reveal the practicability of ultimate organic union between the sentiments and attitudes which have been associated with historic Christianity and the assumptions of the modern outlook upon the world. If a new framework of religious thought is developed we cannot be sure that it will be even recognized as Christian. This is but one of the inevitable risks which will accompany a process of experimental thinking and living which will see many false starts, follow many abortive clues, and end in many blind alleys.

In the light of such possibilities we may be sure that if mature men and women accompany youth upon its quest it will not be because they love adventure more than security. It will be because they know that the great religious tradition within which they were reared as children is breaking up and they have no choice but to pack up their treasures of precious sentiments and associations and seek a new house of faith where they may have once more a home for their souls.

No one can tell such men and women that when a great belief passes nothing is lost. They know that for the time being almost everything may be lost to the individual and the generation. These historic forms in which men have done their religious thinking have been just as essential to spiritual power as dams, sluiceways and turbines are to the generation of electric power. Not until more adequate beliefs are built up to take the place of those which have become obsolete can the spiritual power latent in the impulses, the intuitions, and the historic religious experience of the race be impounded again and released to the energizing of mankind. And we agree with Albert Schweitzer that "only as we again succeed in attaining a strong and worthy theory of the universe and find in it strong and worthy convictions shall we again become capable of producing a new civilization."[1]

It is because the need of "strong and worthy convictions" is so imperative that we are impelled to go on and survey some of the materials which may possibly enter into their constitution.

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[1] Schweitzer, *The Decay and Restoration of Civilization,* p. x.

The universe thus disclosed is through and through interdependent. The body pollutes the mind, the mind pollutes the body. Physical energy sublimates itself into zeal; conversely, zeal stimulates the body. The biological ends pass into ideals of standards, and the formation of standards affects the biological facts. The individual is formative of the society, the society is formative of the individual. Particular evils infect the whole world, particular goods point the way of escape.

—WHITEHEAD, *Religion in the Making*, p. 87.

Chapter Two

THE MODERN INTELLECTUAL OUTLOOK

In his volume entitled *The World Crisis 1916-1918* Winston Churchill describes how those who were responsible for the conduct of the war were impressed by the great variety of the factors which entered into the composition of events. Even the best minds could not begin to master them all. In this situation the method followed was to fasten upon the factors which seemed most significant, adjust to them and use them, trusting to luck, God, and the movement of events for a favorable result. Such a result was not always obtained, for it was the common experience to find some neglected factor turning victory into defeat.

Man seems to have no other method for dealing with situations beyond his limited area of use and wont, especially large-scale situations where all his experts are helpless. We have no other method available now in approaching the confusion of our time than to select those elements which seem in the light of our experience to be most pertinent to the building of a new house of faith and to use them to make our experience more rich and coherent, knowing full well that events may reveal other factors more significant than those which appeal to us. In accordance with this procedure we ask two questions whose answering promises to lead us a little way on the road toward the understanding of the religious mind which we believe to be in the making.

The first question is, "What assumptions and trends of thought characteristic of modern intelligence are likely to condition the workings of that mind?" The second, "What intuitions of historic Christianity are likely to be embodied in it?" To the first question we devote the present chapter; to the second, the chapter following.

I

In partial answer to the first question we suggest that the modern intelligent person assumes much more readily than his mediæval ancestor the relative permanence of this world of space and time. Even his religious outlook has a this-world emphasis. It is true that he is confused as to what space and time really are. The physicists tell him that space is curved and that time is relative to the motion and position of the observer, so that we really ought to speak of a "space-time continuum." It is true, also, especially since the discovery of the X-ray and the peculiar properties of radium, along with the study of the atom by Rutherford and Bohr, that this space-time continuum seems to be occupied by ceaselessly active energies whose ultimate nature is beyond our knowledge.

But the more abstruse investigations of physics have not affected the modern assumption that this space-time world which has been the scene of human history will continue to remain the frame of man's dominant ideals and interests. The oldest rocks date back 1,400 million years. Sir Arthur Keith tells us that it is about 2 million years since a humanoid stem separated off from the ancestral animal stock, and most anthropologists now agree that the primary distinctions between the existing races of men originated several hundred thousand years ago. Man has been here upon this earth, accordingly, for untold ages and he will probably be here for millions of years to come. We are frankly not expecting that "the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat"; nor that "the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up." Geology has forever invalidated Usher's chronology, and Biblical criticism has revealed the eschatology of the early Church as the product of, and only pertinent to, a specific environment.

More important than any array of mere facts in making the modern outlook a this-world affair has been man's success in finding methods which enable him to control the forces of space and time as compared with his progress in dealing with the affairs of the next world. In the enlargement of his knowledge of the next world man has made no progress since the apostolic age, and much of the knowledge which he is supposed to possess, based on religious tradition, is open to question as to its reliability. Contrast, on the other hand, the constantly accelerating growth under the guiding genius of science, of man's knowledge of this world. In view of the psychological fact which William James emphasized, that it is the changing aspects of experience which control the focus of attention, it is not difficult to understand why, with knowledge of the next world static and knowledge of this world dynamic, man should seek the validation of his interests in the here and now. For practical purposes, accordingly, that is in matters of conduct, the dual universe of the Middle Ages is becoming one world and that the world of space and time.

The difficulties which this change in attitude creates for religion may be seen against the background of the following passage from the *De Monarchia* of Dante. At the conclusion of his argument concerning the respective spheres and relations of Emperor and Pope the great Florentine says:

> Two ends, therefore, have been laid down by the ineffable providence of God for man to aim at: the blessedness of this life, which consists in the exercise of his natural powers, and which is prefigured in the earthly Paradise; and next, the blessedness of the life eternal, which consists in the fruition of the sight of God's countenance and to which man by his own natural powers cannot rise, if he be not aided by the divine light; and this blessedness is understood by the heavenly Paradise.
>
> But to these different kinds of blessedness, as to different conclusions, we must come by different means. For at the first we may arrive by the lessons of philosophy, if only we will follow them, by acting in accordance with the moral and intellectual virtues. But at the second we can only arrive by spiritual lessons, transcending human reason, so that we follow them in accordance with the theological virtues, faith, hope, and charity.
>
> Therefore man had need of two guides for his life, as he had a twofold end in life; whereof one is the Supreme Pontiff, to lead mankind to eternal life, according to the things revealed to us; and the other is the Emperor, to

guide mankind to happiness in this world, in accordance with the teaching of philosophy.[1]

In the light of this passage the fundamental difference between the mediæval and the modern point of view becomes immediately clear. In the mediæval period man had two great ends of life—happiness here and happiness beyond. How concrete and vivid that happiness beyond was and how dire the fate of those who missed it Dante himself reveals in the *Commedia*. To happiness here, the Emperor was the guide, who employed to that end the achieved wisdom of human reason. To happiness beyond, the Pope was the guide, employing as the means of salvation the supernatural truths which were in the keeping of the Church.

Two worlds; two kinds of happiness; two kinds of wisdom, the one earthly, the other heavenly; two institutions, the State and the Church, divinely appointed to dispense, each its respective type of wisdom appropriate to happiness in its world. That is mediævalism.

One world; one happiness; one wisdom; one *institutum salutis*—the total organization of human society—dispensing wisdom and guidance appropriate to man's life in his one world. That is modernism.

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[1] *De Monarchia*, bk. iii, ch. xvi. Trans. F. J. Church, included in R. W. Church's *Dante*, London, 1879.

Does this mean that there is no life after death, that religion and the Church, being based upon an illusory next world, have lost their function, that the truths which have constituted their wisdom will fade away now that the function which was their root has dried up? The answers to that question mark the great cleft in modernism. There are those who answer "Yes" to this question. This is essentially the position of naturalism.

There are also those who answer "No." They say that what is happening is not the wiping out of one of the mediæval worlds, but rather the consolidation of the two worlds into one. They claim that the elements in human nature which sought fulfillment in an immortal life are just as real and as imperious in their urge as they ever were. Heaven and hell were but symbols in which age-long desires and intuitions as to the meaning of life found expression. The distinction between the two kinds of wisdom, that which is based on reason and that which rests on revelation, represents real differences in the levels of our experience as well as in the methods by which our knowledge comes. As for the function of religion and its institution, that function has already undergone profound changes in human history and will probably undergo many more, but religion moves ahead even in its most cataclysmic changes by finding the new in the old and the old in the new.

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In other words, those who take the position which we have just outlined (and with which the writer is in sympathy) tell us that the answer of naturalism is too simple, too logical, and too narrow even as a base for scientific research because it gets rid of all sympathy with the views which are to be studied. It is too cocksure. It does not appreciate sufficiently our ignorance of even the forces of space and time. (Compare Eddington's suggestion that the ultimate nature of the objective world is mental.) It does not sense the fact that none of its measurements of space and time can ever grasp life as quality.

> . . . years are not life:
> Years are the shells of life, and empty shells
> When they hold only days, and days and days.[2]

And finally naturalism is too sterile. With the other world and all that it has meant in human experience scrapped, even the world of space-time which remains, loses its meaning and worth. (Compare the writings of George Santayana, Joseph Wood Krutch, Aldous Huxley, Dos Passos *et al.*) The more significant though more formidable task of modern intelligence is the integration of the two worlds and their respective wisdoms with all the mutual adjustments and modifications which that task will involve. Such a task can only be assumed with confidence upon the basis of the conviction that the real world is more unified than the two worlds of mediævalism and more rich, complex, and satisfying than the one world of naturalism.

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[2] From Edwin Arlington Robinson's poem *Tristram.*

Meanwhile, one assured result of this great premise of modern intelligence—the relative permanence of the space-time world—is already apparent. Religious thinkers of various schools admit that the worth of religion and of faith must be discovered and vindicated here and now. Since Copernicus and Darwin, the survival of a religion which promises simply a post-mortem salvation as the outcome of conformity to an esoteric technique of ritual and the acceptance of esoteric truths in the sole keeping of the Church grows ever more dubious. The value of a religion is being tested more and more by its capacity to increase and discipline the energies of men in the realization of humane ideals, to illumine the meaning and purpose of life, to buttress the soul against the shock of circumstance, and to provide even in the midst of our mortality that vision of "God's countenance" which will constitute an effective promise of its "fruition" in days to come.

A religion which examines itself by such tests will not discard the desires of humanity which have found their only ultimate satisfaction in a future life. But it will not depreciate this life as other-worldliness has done. It will recognize it, rather, in the most realistic way, as eternal life in the midst of time. "Now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be." In this fragment of ancient faith, historic religion and modern intelligence may meet.

Man has settled upon the planet for a long stay. The reorientation of religion in the light of that assumption has just begun. But already the fulcrum upon which rests the lever of moral and spiritual progress is seen to consist of the validated experiences of this life rather than of esoteric communications concerning the nature of the next.

II

Another assumption of modern intelligence bound to increasingly affect religious thinking is that of man's animal origin and his continuity with nature. The picture which science presents of man's progressive development upon the planet is beginning to come clear. There are still blurred and cloudy patches in the picture, and the primary causes of the "origin of species" and of the "descent of man" are still almost as obscure as when Darwin published his famous volumes.

But once you have seen this picture of an animal-like creature emerging from eons of crude gropings and satisfactions, carrying in his body scores of vestigial reminders of his kinship with other species, conditioned in his thinking, his feelings, and his desires by ages of struggle for survival—once you have seen it you can never forget it. Henceforth you will be looking to nature for explanations of human conduct and to man for possible clues to the meaning of nature's striving.

The interpretation of human conduct in terms of nature is a commonplace of scientific research. The roots of even man's moral and religious behavior are being everywhere traced down into his natural history. The qualities of his personality are being correlated with the functioning of the endocrine glands, religious crises with the physical and psychical changes of puberty, certain mystical moods with physiological states, the sense of sin with the conflict between biological urges and social conventions, and the development of ideals with both the stimulating and the thwarting influences of the environment.

When you turn from a study of the details of man's conduct to a sweeping vision of it as a whole you have moments when you realize that you are looking out not merely upon a human but upon a natural, yes, a cosmic scene. Such a moment came to the writer in 1918 on a battlefield in France. These frail human creatures with soft tender flesh and sensitive nerves being hurled against one another in a vast experience of reciprocal torture—what did it all mean? Was it all the result of blameworthy human ineptitude, stupid leadership, and the evil machinations of aged statesmen devoid of ideals and human feeling? Such an explanation seemed pitifully sophisticated. One did not need to turn to the Norse myth of the gods fighting above the battlefield for a more adequate answer. But he could think of the solidarity of hive, flock, pack, and clan, of the reaction of even the most elementary organisms against foreign substances, of the progressive development of such reactions into fear of the stranger and hostility to the alien, of the expansive urge which thrusts out insect, animal, and human societies in search of the means of richer living, of the loyalties to leaders and to groups which had enabled mankind to organized itself and organized societies to create the precious fabric of human culture. In such a moment the battlefield became a great recapitulation of natural history and the prevention of war was seen to involve the reëducation of impulses which through eons of subhuman as well as human experience had been found essential to survival.

The particular significance of man's continuity with nature in this connection is that it forbids the sharp distinction between man and nature of which the theologians have been fond. It emphasizes the prior claim of the motive of understanding in our approach to every variety of human conduct. And it makes moral and spiritual redemption a many-sided process involving the coöperation of the whole natural order with man's struggle for his highest ideals. The wolf will need to dwell with the lamb; the calf, the young lion and the fatling together, as in Isaiah's vision of the regeneration of nature—only the agent of that regeneration will be no Messianic King endowed with miraculous powers, but man, to use Sir Ray Lankester's phrase, "nature's insurgent son," leading the urges and the strivings of nature to their larger fulfillment. "And a little child shall lead them."

Of course, man could not lead these forces of nature unless in some way or other he were more than they. While the roots of man's life run down into natural history, yet does that history not entirely explain him. Evolution is creative and there is always something at every stage of the advancing process which could not have been anticipated. Man is an animal, but he is more, much more. The plasticity of human protoplasm is beyond all our imagining, and its ideal-achieving properties leave us dumb with awe, stricken before an inscrutable vastness. And while there are limits to anatomical structure and physiological functioning and while there are doubtless mental levels and personality classes, yet in the stimulations of his environment, in the fecundity of his germinal elements in variations, in the reëducation of his instinctive urges and in his mastery of nature's forces, there are incalculable possibilities. Man is yet in the making.

We have turned to nature for an interpretation of man. Does man, on his part, throw any light upon the meaning of nature? Here modern intelligence displays the greatest hesitation. It has with difficulty dispelled from nature the illusions created by anthropomorphic views. It does not desire these views to return. Yet men cannot be the product of something wholly unlike himself and it is apparent that here is another case where we cannot have our cake and eat it too.

Before man became in the thought of the intellectual world the offspring of nature, it was possible, in the light of the Newtonian physics, to think of nature as being like a machine, a great complex of impersonal energies, a dynamic order, in which changes were strictly determined by the parallelogram of forces active in a given situation. According to this view, if one had absolutely complete knowledge of the facts of the universe, he could make a mathematical analysis of those facts and trace their causal nexus right back from the present to the beginning of time. Of course, life itself was a staggering problem for this view, and the bewildering variety of nature, her fecundity in individual forms, and the ladder of the evolutionary series starting amid the bacteria of the primeval slime and rising by impressive stages to the human level, all put a strain upon the metaphor of the machine.

The conquest of man, soul and body, for the natural order was hailed at first as the final triumph of mechanistic theory. But the presence of all of man's higher powers within a mechanistic process has proven desperately disconcerting. Thinkers have had to erect an image of nature as a "robot," dynamical in inner character, but creating and begetting, forever striving for something different, yet never conscious that she is striving or of what she is striving for, achieving ends without trying to do so and with the most marvelous success and the most inviolable ignorance, until at last she gives birth to a creature who, himself possessed of consciousness, purpose, intelligence, imagination, and ideals, knows nature, his mother, for the "robot" that she is.

No wonder that the thinkers who have created such a picture cannot respect their own handiwork. Bertrand Russell, for instance (and I do not think that I have seriously caricatured his view), tells us that "an attitude of reverence towards the universe . . . is hardly compatible with the modern belief in man's omnipotence through the machine. We do not contemplate a flea, we catch it. The modern point of view is in its infancy, but we may foresee a time when it will lead men to regard the non-human world in general with as little reverence as we now feel towards the poor flea."[3] A "robot," you see, even as vast as the universe of space and time, may arouse our curiosity and wonder but not our respect.

The fact is that man as a product of nature has laid a heavy burden upon a logic which seeks in any balancing of forces, or in blind strivings and coördinations, the clue to nature's achievement. Those who attempt to carry such logic through are likely to find themselves in the end making admissions which give away their case. Thus General Smuts, who steadfastly refuses to admit an inner purpose in evolution or a Mind behind or within it, nevertheless confesses the following, concerning the natural process: "There is a process with a persistent trend, which cannot possibly be the mere result of accident. If it were all a matter of chance and contingency the odds would be infinitely more in favour of chaos than of this persistent trend of intensifying structure and order." [4]

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[3] Russell, in *Whither Mankind,* p. 66.

Smuts can only account for the process by admitting "a persistent overbalance of the equilibria of existence in a more or less definite inner direction." But why should this overbalance lead the process steadily upward? Note his answer: "The nature of the universe points to something deeper, to something beyond itself. The persistent overbalance in its equilibrium shows that it is not self-sufficing. It has a trend; it has a list. It has an immanent Telos. It belongs to or is making for some greater whole. And the pull of this greater whole is registered in its inmost structures." [5]

In another passage Smuts confesses that without the appearance of Mind in the later stages of evolution "the universe would have been an altogether dull affair, however unimaginably grand in other respects." [6] Evidently, the South African philosopher can hardly keep himself from saying that Mind and man have given us a clue to the meaning of nature. But a philosopher cannot say this without laying himself open to the charge of anthropomorphism. Happily, a poet does not have to exercise such self-restraint, and Edith Anne Stewart in lines entitled *To Everyman* allows us to cross the threshold of a thought which Smuts seems to have visioned from afar:

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[4] Smuts, *Holism and Evolution,* p. 178.

[5] Smuts, *Holism and Evolution,* p. 179.

[6] *Ibid.,* p. 249. The entire paragraph on pp. 248-249 is in point.

All things search until they find
God through the gateway of thy mind.

Highest star and humblest clod
Turn home through thee, to God.

When thou rejoicest in the rose
Blissful from earth to heaven she goes:

Upon thy bosom summer seas
Escape from their captivities:

Within thy sleep the sightless eyes
Of night revisage Paradise:

In thy soft awe yon mountain high
To his creator draweth nigh:

This lovely tarn, reflecting thee,
Returneth to eternity:

And thus in thee the circuit vast
Is rounded and complete at last,

And at last, through thee revealed
To God, what time and space concealed;[7]

Can it be that today the meaning of life is still hidden from "the wise and prudent" but is revealed to poets; to saints like Francis with his Brother Sun and Sister Moon, Brother Wind and Sister Water, Sister Mother Earth and Sister Mortal Death; yes, and to the faith of religion that "the earnest expectation of the creation waiteth for the revealing of the sons of God?"

Modern intelligence evidently does not know as yet what it is going to make out of its great assumption of man's animal inheritance and his continuity with nature. It values greatly and is using the light thrown upon man's conduct by its knowledge of nature's ways. On the other hand, it senses in man something which does not seem to fall entirely within the compass of natural history. It hesitates to invest nature with manlike qualities. Yet its more sophisticated schemes fail to leave a basis in nature for the emergence of man. And above all with their constant interpretation of nature in terms of the subhuman they fail to place man in the presence of a whole which he can respect. All of man's deeper feelings protest against such a whole. The whole to which he belongs with his intelligence, his purpose, his love, and his ideals, and the whole from which he came and which he serves, must be more, not less, worthy of reverence than his frail humanity. But what kind of a whole is it?

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[7] Stewart, Edith Anne, in the (London) *Nation*, November, 1918.

The raising of this question leads us to consider another characteristic of modern intelligence.

III

Modern intelligence is reaching out toward a new philosophy. We shall call it the organic view of the world. The essential element of this view is that of the interrelatedness of all things. The connections between mind and body, the individual and the group, man and nature, nature and God, are more intimate and constant than our fathers imagined. A concise statement of this principle is found in the passage from Whitehead's *Religion in the Making*, which prefaces this chapter. The most comprehensive analysis of it has probably been made by Hobhouse in his *Development and Purpose*.

Hobhouse interprets organic structure as being characterized by the reciprocal influence of a whole and its parts, and of an organism and its environment. He goes on to suggest that in the formation of new organic types there is a synthesis of elements previously separated; that the organism in the course of its development continues to take up and utilize elements originally foreign to it, and that it changes and grows up to the limits of modifiability consonant with the type; that after these limits are reached there is no possibility of development except through a new synthesis. In the formation of a new synthesis there is frequently a break-up of the old, disorder, conflict, and death. But development consists in the production of new syntheses, the organization of greater varieties of natural elements and patterns into new harmonious unities. The universe is thus a vast system of interpenetrating syntheses, inorganic and organic, whose interrelations create tension and disintegration but which also gather chaotic fragments into ever more significant wholes.[8]

Various thinkers have seized upon various aspects of the organic view of the world. Whitehead and Pupin develop their theories about the synthesizing activity, the element of concretion and coördination. Smuts builds his view upon the reciprocity between parts and whole. Lloyd Morgan emphasizes the emergence of the new synthesis and the domination of the old by the new. The common element in all these approaches is the conviction that in man's experience with organic phenomena rather than with those which seem to be most nearly mechanical in their nature there is a subtle clue to the central organizing process of the universe.

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[8] Hobhouse, *Development and Purpose,* pp. 306, 359-363. London, 1913.

The influence of this view of the world is apparent today in every realm of systematic thought, notably in the social sciences, but in this connection we shall have to be content with pointing out why it appeals to the writer with his particular interests.

It appeals to him because it offers a rational interpretation of the activities and interests of the community in which he lives. Everywhere he sees the interpenetration of syntheses of life organized around business, pleasure, politics, religion, and scientific research; the disintegrating effects of these contacts upon tradition in every realm and the trend toward new wholes made up of fragments from older syntheses.

It appeals to him also because it offers a method of attack upon even his most intimate problems as a pastor. Take a case of bereavement, for instance, which is typical of a minister's work. The organic point of view suggests that in every such case there are two elements to be dealt with—the person and the situation—which is the larger context of his life and work. The first approach when illness comes to a home is an attack upon the situation by means of the best medical skill. The sympathy and interest of friends are enlisted also to penetrate the home with the warmth of fellow-feeling. The sharing of trouble makes its burden lighter. Then comes death. The great adjustment now is that which must take place in the attitudes of the persons bereaved. Many people practically reconstruct their outlook upon life through such experiences. Some become hard and bitter as the context of their life changes, others more humane. At this juncture one may contribute again from the point of view of the situation. He may help the bereaved to find new tasks and interests out of which may grow new friendships, and thus old emotional states may become tied up with new objects of concern.

Justice Holmes has suggested that "all that life offers any man from which to start his thinking or his striving is a fact. And if this universe is one universe, if it is so far thinkable that you can pass in reason from one part to another, it does not matter very much what that fact is."[9] But if you should be selecting facts from which to start your thinking about the universe, I wonder if there are any facts more significant than those which center in the experience of bereavement.

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[9] Quoted by John Dewey in an article "Justice Holmes and the Liberal Mind," in the *New Republic* for January 11, 1928.

Here is a whole (persons and their situation) broken into fragments. Here is the inevitable urge toward a new synthesis. Here, if the process is successful, you find a new whole reacting upon the character of the persons and upon their environment.

If these facts are typical of the organic process and if this process is characteristic of the whole of nature, is it any wonder that from this experience millions of bereaved souls have been able to reach out from homes which have been desolated and touch the very rim of the universe? Is there not more than poetry in the following lines of Angela Morgan:

I am aware
As I go commonly sweeping the stair
Doing my part of the everyday care—

. . . .

I am aware of the glory that runs
From the core of myself to the core of the suns.
Bound to the stars by invisible chains,
Blaze of eternity now in my veins,
Seeing the rush of ethereal rains
Here in the midst of the everyday air—
I am aware.

I am aware,
As I sit quietly here in my chair,

Sewing or reading or braiding my hair—
Human and simple my lot and my share—

. . . .

I am aware of the splendor that ties
All the things of the earth with the things of the skies,
Here in my body the heavenly heat,
Here in my flesh the melodious beat
Of the planets that circle Divinity's feet.
As I sit silently here in my chair,
I am aware.[10]

More than poetry we say because these lines express in rhythmic form the intuitions of the millions as they have sought to enter into the meaning of their universal experiences.

But the writer is primarily interested in the organic view of the world because of its suggestiveness in the reconstruction of religious faith. What does it offer us in this connection? For the most part it offers us questions, yet these questions must be asked before they can be answered. And the very asking of the questions may put old issues in a new light.

Concerning religion, accordingly, the organic view asks whether the deeper reason for man's impulses of worship may not lie in the urge toward the whole which is present everywhere in nature. Augustine's "Thou hast made us for Thyself and our hearts are restless until they find rest in Thee," Bosanquet's "you cannot be a whole unless you join a whole," William James' statement "the innermost of the empirical selves of a man is a Self of the social sort" which "can find its only adequate Socius in an ideal world," and Edward Rowland Sill's lines,

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[10] From Angela Morgan's *Kinship*.

> Until are heard
> In the wide starlight's stillness, unknown words,
> That make the heart ache till it find its home,

all relate essentially to the same thing. Is not worship the supreme effort of the human to realize, to dedicate itself to and to identify itself with the whole to which in its inmost nature it belongs? If this question is answered in the affirmative the organic view of the world would seem to lend rational support to the most characteristic activity of religion.

Concerning salvation, this view inquires whether this term of Christian thought does not represent that ideal synthesis of life whose potential elements are already present in personality and environment, but which are either disunited or joined in an unworthy form. Is not sin, on the other hand, the "disintegration of one's acts and purposes at a higher level that events may run their course at a lower level?"[11]

In reference to the belief in God inquiry is likely to be directed toward the concept of "personality" which has been associated with deity. We shall probably be asked to consider the results of the modern study of personality as a going concern. Students of personality find it very difficult to draw the line between hereditary influences upon conduct, the effects of environment, and the spontaneous and novel contributions of the individual. When you add in all the subtle factors of personality which are dependent upon glands, hormones, and psychic patterns of behavior which have been determined in childhood and over which the individual has little control, you find in "personality" a very complex product. When you think of all the theological blind alleys that men have plunged into and of all the responsibilities for human ills that they have saddled upon the Eternal because they insisted on thinking of God as an "unconditioned" personality, it is rather a relief to find that such a "personality" is a pure abstraction that we know nothing about in real life. All real personalities appear in situations which affect them and which they in turn affect.

Instead of starting out with a category applied to

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[11] Lloyd Morgan, *Life, Mind and Spirit,* p. 290.

God like that of "personality" whose implications one immediately begins to deduce, the progress of religious thought and the development of religious faith are likely to be served by asking the question, "Under what circumstances in human experience do we come upon God and what do these circumstances tell us of his nature?" The result of such an inquiry will probably be to break down some of the rigid categories in which men have conceived the divine and to help them discern God first of all as a factor in the life of nature and the experience of man—a factor whose significance the entire world process is unfolding.

The meaning of the person of Christ for Christian thought is of course tied up as far as statements of faith are concerned with conceptions of God and human personality. In this connection, the organic view ventures to inquire again whether we have not differentiated too sharply between an individual and a situation. Is not the Christian revelation to be found in the situation out of which Jesus grew and in the response of men to his presence among them as well as in his acts and words considered as a thing apart? Certainly the New Testament hints at such a view of revelation in the words "when the fullness of time was come God sent forth his Son" and "no man can say that Jesus is the Lord but by the Holy Ghost."

The acceptance of this suggestion would minimize the conflict between the religion of Jesus and the religion about Jesus. It would also reduce the interest in setting Christ and Christianity over against one another in irreconcilable opposition. It would view the historic Church as a participant in the process of revelation. It would also challenge our own generation to read the signs of its own times.

The outcome of the organic view of the world in its application to religion would probably be to make the process of human redemption once more a cosmic affair. Once more man would see the thrusts and strivings of nature expressed in his own aspirations and achievements. He would stand in the midst of his world and feel at home in it, no longer dreading either its awful ignorance and indifference or the judgments of an arbitrary power whose communications, all rigidly enchanneled, had little relation to his own everyday life. He could rejoice in the gifts of sunshine which came to him from his world and recognize in its shadows a challenge to his own powers of synthesis which may make the seed of death to bear the fruit of life. The opposition between personal and social salvation would become irrelevant, for personal and social are but names for different aspects of one process which involves lifting the entire human order to the level of the divine.

The most adequate parable of the process of redemption from this point of view is found in the book of *Revelation*, where the author in his description of the Holy City says that "the Kings of the earth do bring their honor and their glory into it." Yes, the destiny of the treasures of earth is the City of God. Glands and hormones, mental levels and complexes, situations and adjustments, ways of earning a living, ways of loving and begetting, leisure and play, economic forces and political systems, science, art, and the institutions of religion, poets' dreams and statesmen's plans, the habits of the crowd and the visions of the solitary, tradition and invention, prayer and the creativity of pain, the pæan of birth and the requiem of death—all have their contribution to make to that nobler order with which nature and man are in travail. And it is in our struggle for that order that we moderns may make our greatest discovery. For we may come upon One who will seem now born of our struggle and now the author of it, who assumes our struggle and the order for which we strive as His own, so that in the long last "God and His Kingdom" may seem to us, as to our fathers, the deathless symbol of man's deepest insight into the meaning of his life.

In the light of such a manifold redemption nothing in the everyday life of man is seen to be trivial. "What God hath cleansed call not thou common." The wisdom of Jesus who walked among the birds and flowers of Galilee as in the garden of the Eternal, and of the man of Assisi who loved the little creatures of his Umbrian hills as his brothers and sisters may yet become the crowning wisdom to which our modernity may aspire.

IV

We have concluded our discussion of the organic view of the world, and with it we have practically finished our answer to the question: What assumptions and points of view characteristic of modern intelligence are likely to condition the new religious mind which we believe to be in the making? We have noted the permanence of the space-time order and man's continuity with nature as such assumptions. The organic conception is not an assumption. It is a point of view, a trend of philosophic faith, a goal toward which thinkers seem to be traveling. Even in its present inchoate form it is one of the most fertile influences in the thought of our day.

We have confined our attention in this chapter to influences which are predominantly intellectual in their origin because the forces which were primarily responsible for breaking up the old religious tradition were also intellectual. We are aware, however, that there are other influences registering their effects upon our religious thought which arise from the organization and mode of life incident to our machine culture. We shall consider some of these influences later on. May we but mention here one more characteristic of modern intelligence which is likely to condition the structure of a new house of faith? That is the spirit of inquiry.

The spirit of inquiry arises out of the conviction that ours is an open, growing, and experimental world where thought and effort count. It has been greatly stimulated by two conditions of modern life: the success of scientific research and the complexity of civilization which has increased the importance of the intellectual factor in the solution of all our problems. There is no phase of life where we do not get ahead by virtue of this spirit, the questions it asks, the understanding it achieves, and the plans it formulates. In the habituation of this spirit to the problems of religion lies one of our hopes of increasing the spiritual fertility of the coming years.

As for the Christian Church, if it will accept this spirit as sacred, and honor its exercise as essential to the realization of its own aspiration for world redemption, it will probably see a change in the spirit of religious inquiry as frequently manifested in academic circles. That spirit will take on the mood of humility which is the highest wisdom of science and lose some of the self-confidence and cynicism which have been generated within it by clerical opposition.

It would be futile to deny, however, that the spirit of inquiry will raise many problems. We do not know as yet how great the influence upon religion of the change from a static to a growing world will be. In a static world of fixed forms and ideas you could have a "faith once for all delivered to the saints." Not in a growing world. The only faith capable of enlisting the permanent allegiance of a growing world is a growing faith. Whether or not the temper of Christianity is congenial to such a faith is one of the questions we face in this book.

In actual life Natural or Rational Religion or Pure Theism exists as the mirage after the setting, or as the dawn before the rising of an Historical Religion. . . .

. . . in real life Natural Religion exists as a set or as a system of propositions effected by philosophers who, in spite of their frequent disdain of all Sects and Churches, derive both their materials and their understanding of these materials from these despised positive teachings and historical traditions. And beside those rudiments of the positive religions and these abstractions from the positive religions there exists no such thing in actual life as a Natural Philosophical Religion.

—VON HUGEL, *Essays and Addresses on the Philosophy of Religion,* p. xvi.

The philosophies that remain ineffectual and academic are those that are formed by abstract reflection without relation to the thirsty souls of humankind . . . the philosophies that have driving force behind them are those which arise . . . out of the practical demands of human feeling.

—HOBHOUSE, *Liberalism,* p. 51.

Chapter Three

PERSISTENT INTUITIONS OF CHRISTIANITY

We approach now the other question which we asked at the beginning of the previous chapter:—What intuitions of historic Christianity are likely to be embodied in the new religious mind?

The author, of course, is writing from the religious background of evangelical Christianity. He knows no other religion at first hand. What he has to say of his own religion may be true of liberal Christianity and of other religions as well. He is not interested in attempting to distill the peculiar essence of Christianity. He desires only to suggest certain elements of the historic Christian outlook upon life which regardless of doctrinal changes seem to have an abiding quality and to be particularly challenging in the intellectual situation of the present.

The term "intuition" is used here to represent a kind of knowledge which is not in the main the result of conscious logical inference. It is not necessarily illogical nor is it necessarily mystical and exempt from criticism. It is the kind of knowledge that we have of the intimate aspects of our existence where most of our adjustments are not reasoned out. It is also the kind of knowledge which starts from our experience of "wholes," from the grasp of total situations which we seem to secure through our physical senses, our feelings, and a myriad of psychic senses which have not yielded up their subtleties as yet to scientific analysis. Unfortunately, our intuitive knowledge is no more pure than that which is inferential because it comes to us mixed up with various mental attitudes and points of view which we have absorbed unconsciously from custom and tradition, so that like any other knowledge intuitions are subject to correction. But they do represent a deeper stratum of experience than do systems of doctrine and therefore they seem worthy of consideration in thinking of those elements which are likely to enter into the religious outlook of the future.

What persistent intuitions of Christianity, essential to its historic continuity, are likely to be constituents of the new religious mind?[1]

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[1] We must be content here merely with suggesting the importance of certain intuitive elements of the Christian outlook. The question of their validity and value is involved in later discussions concerning God, Christ, and Human Fate in Chapters IV-VIII.

I

One of them certainly is the apprehension in the richest religious experiences of life of something which has been "given" to the individual as well as achieved by him. It is the sense of having to do in religion with something (or some one) which is outside oneself, which is objective and existent in its own right, which is not primarily dependent upon our wishes or imagining, but which has given itself to us.

The Christian tradition is saturated with this intuitive experience of the "otherness" and the "graciousness" of the religious object. It pervades all those passages of Scripture which speak of "receiving" the word of God, the forgiveness of sins, or the gift of the Holy Ghost. "Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable gift." It is the assumption upon which prayer and worship, the central acts of religion, are based. It is at the heart of the doctrine of Grace and the belief in a Revelation. It is the root of the Calvinistic insistence upon the divine initiative in the process of redemption. It is the strength of all reaffirmations of the divine transcendence like that of Karl Barth. It constitutes the basic appeal of all systems of objective religious authority. Men want to get their faith grounded down on that reality outside themselves which they have met in religion, and they crave connection with it through visible symbols.

The entire Christian view of the process of redemption as embodied in the ideas of Incarnation and Atonement is based upon the conviction that man's redemption is wrought out by the coöperation of an "other" and a higher Goodness which suffers with him and for him, the best for the worst.

We may also venture the assertion that the greatest religious lives, whether of prophet, saint, or apostle, are dominated by this same intuition in a vivid form. The prophet speaks for an "other"; the saint has been made holy by and for an "other"; the apostle is sent by an "other." These heroic types are not engaged in inventing a religion. Nor are they trying to find a view of religion which they can hold. They have a religion which holds them. It is only such a religion that men propagate with zeal and for which they die.

We should like to venture the suggestion that this Christian intuition of our highest values as "given" is perhaps the intense core of a wider human experience of the same general quality. Who has looked into the face of his first-born child, this marvelous being which has originated in the casual mating of a man and a woman, without a sense of the vastness of the contribution of life and its forces to his happiness as compared with conscious efforts of his own? Who, as he looks out upon his own career and thinks of the long struggle of the ages and the slow accretions of culture which were essential to his opportunity, is not aware that where he has written a line life has written a volume which gives the line its meaning? The moonlight streaming through the trees and the sunset across the bay, the kiss of first love, the apprehension of a great truth and the heroism of a sufferer, all have this quality of "givenness." The Christian intuition seems to be an intensification on the highest level of concern of a way of apprehending life which is native to the human in his most significant moments.

At any rate, this sense of an objective "other" which gives itself to us is a universal characteristic of historic Christianity and marks it off from all cults which think of religion as simply the outreach and achievement of man. The Christian does not deny the value of such an emphasis, but he insists that religion is more, much more.

II

Another intuition of historic Christianity is the conviction that the religious object (whose "otherness" and "graciousness" we have just been discussing) may be known by every man. It is the conviction that God is accessible to the multitude, to the humblest in knowledge and social status as well as to the learned and the great.

"I thank Thee, O Father, Lord of Heaven and Earth, because Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes." "Not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called; but God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise: and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the strong." "Every one that loveth is born of God and knoweth God."

That Christianity cherished such sentiments as these was one of the reasons why Celsus objected to it. He did not want a religion which was so accessible to the mass of common folk, as Nietzsche did not desire an ethic which had appealed to slaves.

If the spiritual realities disclosed in Christianity are accessible to all sorts and conditions of men, it follows that the primary data of such a religion are not to be found in the abstract knowledge of either scientists or theologians. They must be given in the concrete experience of ordinary people with their personal interests and intimate concerns. Paul affirmed this truth with the greatest clearness. After mentioning various groups in the Church which possessed specialized knowledge and functions (apostles, teachers, workers of miracles, etc.), he suggests a spiritual gift, basic to the successful exercise of all the others and necessary to their completion, to which the humblest may aspire. "Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels and have not love, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal."

This intuitive element of historic Christianity—the conviction that the spiritual reality may be known by every man, with its correlated emphasis on the religious value of the type of knowledge and experience accessible to ordinary people—may be illustrated by a recent demand for a religion of another kind.

In an article in *Current History* (March, 1929) Professor Harry Elmer Barnes writes as follows: "What we need, if any notion of God is needed, is such a conception of God as might be worked out in the light of the astrophysical discoveries and conceptions of Shapley, Jeans, and Michelson, and the study of atoms and electrons by Bohr, Planck, and Millikan."

The irrelevance as far as the central interests of religion are concerned of Professor Barnes' inquiry for a God who can be shaped out of the formulæ of physics has been exposed by the scientists themselves. Professor Eddington, for instance, explicitly repudiates "any proposal to base religion on scientific discovery." "For my part," he says, "I am wholly opposed to any such attempt." The reason for his attitude he bases upon the fact that "the exploration of the external world by the methods of physical science leads not to a concrete reality, but to a shadow world of symbols, beneath which those methods are unadapted for penetrating." To find the deeper meanings of our world we have "to return to our starting-point in human consciousness (where the symbols of physics originate) the one center where more might become known. There we find other stirrings and other revelations (true or false) than those conditioned by the world of symbols."[2] It is because he feels that the spiritual substratum of life which is known to us immediately in consciousness is essentially non-metrical that Eddington says "the crudest anthropomorphic image of a spiritual deity can scarcely be so wide of the truth as one conceived in terms of metrical equations."[3]

Whitehead apparently agrees with Eddington, for he says: "Religions commit suicide when they find their inspirations in their dogmas. The inspiration of religion lies in the history of religion. By this I mean

[2] Eddington in article in *New York Times*, June 16, 1929, "Science and Religion: as a Scientist Sees It."

[3] Eddington, *The Nature of the Physical World*, p. 282.

that it is to be found in the primary expressions of the intuitions of the finest types of religious lives."[4] This stricture against the primacy of dogma would apply, of course, to abstractions developed by scientists as well as theologians.

No, if this intuition of Christianity, that the supreme spiritual reality is accessible to every man, offers us any clue to the religion of the future, the primary data of that religion are not likely to be discovered in Betelgeuse and announced by Shapley or in the leap of the electron from one quantum orbit to another as interpreted by Bohr. They are not likely to be found there because first-hand knowledge of either Betelgeuse or the atom can never be accessible to more than a small group of highly trained specialists.

The central facts of religion upon which men are willing to stake their lives they will probably always insist on finding, not in areas where these facts can only be tested by the elaborate methods and inferences of experts, but in the area of concrete personal contact and verification. "Whereas I was blind, now I see," will continue to represent the type of experience in its personal immediacy upon the basis of which men will cherish a religious faith.

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[4] Whitehead, *Religion in the Making*, p. 144.

Glorious persons first of all, prophets, saints, martyrs, parents, and friends; wise and homely words like the parables of Jesus which represent "the intuitions of the finest types of religious lives," whether they be the lives of peasants or of princes; wonderful deeds which reveal how the Divine may penetrate the humblest life and transfigure the commonplace; a visible community of the faithful providing concrete practices and a fellowship which sustain the wavering beliefs and resolves of the soul—these will probably continue to furnish the primary contacts of men with the realities of religion. Crises of personal experience when duty conflicts with desire, when human frailty is helpless in the presence of fate, when the baffled soul craves guidance and assurance, these will continue to be the occasions when men will reach out to apprehend a wider spiritual reality which, however inscrutable, is yet capable of entering their lives in a helpful way.

Is not this the reason why so many cults which start out bravely with a fine list of abstractions taken from the latest text-books of science never get anywhere? They never get anywhere because they do not start from the right place. To get somewhere in religion one must start with life as it is experienced by ordinary men and women who may become extraordinary men and women if they can find a religion which is concrete enough to become real in terms of the life that they live. Starting in concrete experiences and relations, religion can then use the abstractions of both science and theology to make its way forward into a richer life.

The Christian religion is partly myth and partly a scheme of things, but the primary sources of its strength do not lie in either quarter. It endures because it makes God accessible to men in deeds done, in lives actually lived. Christianity began in one who embodied his own insight into the meaning of life. It is continued by the constant effort to actualize in history the insights of that person, and the impulses to that effort are communicated by contagion from person to person.

Christianity, accordingly, can never divorce itself from history and become simply a philosophy. The history may be difficult to establish, but what did happen and what does happen is not a matter of indifference. For the transit of vital Christianity in the world is not primarily from dream to dream or from scheme to scheme, but from one heroic deed to another, from a life lived to a life projected.

The God of such a religion is accessible to all men because He works His transformations within the world of concrete everyday experience.

III

One other intuition of Christianity we must mention briefly. It is the sense of life as a moral struggle in which man's victory has cosmic significance.

There is something here that is very old in man's history. In his study of the Greek drama Gilbert Murray points out how the note of strife is at the heart of it all and how the very essence of the heroic consists in man's power even in the midst of the strife that appears to crush him, to stand "outside of the prison of the material present," and to merge himself "in some life that is the object of adoration or desire."[5] When the hero has succeeded in doing this the spectator leaves the theater with the feeling that though the tragedy has ended according to mundane vision in defeat and death, "nothing is here for tears."

Murray's interpretation of the characteristic element in classical tragedy is significant. "What is really characteristic," he says, "is that from the very beginning the tragic conflict has in it an element of mystery derived ultimately from the ancient religious conceptions of *Katharsis* and atonement. The contest takes place on a deeper level of reality. It is not to be estimated in terms of ordinary success or failure, ordinary justice and injustice, but in those of *some profounder scheme of values in which suffering is not the worst of things nor happiness the best*"[6] (Italics mine). The victor in the tragic conflict adjusts himself to this profounder, this more-than-human scheme of values.

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[5] Murray, *The Classical Tradition in Poetry*, p. 51.

Primitive Christianity is suffused with this ancient experience of man. Its followers are warriors for the Eternal. "Not my will but Thine be done." "I have fought a good fight . . . I have kept the faith." Man wrestles not against flesh and blood, but against spiritual hosts of wickedness in heavenly places. He puts on the whole armor of God. No one can snatch him out of his Father's hand. The cosmos has a stake in his struggle. "We are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works."

Is it necessary to say that those who share this attitude toward the meaning of life, whether the attitude be born of sympathy with the intuitions of the ancient classical dramatists or of experience in the Christian faith, can never think of life as a mere matter of personal "adjustments," or of morality as mere expediency or as a mere dissolving film of changing social conventions, or of happiness in the sense of physiological contentment or an equilibrium of instincts, as the ultimate goal of human existence?

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[6] Murray, *op. cit.*, p. 66.

Can the human nature which has endured the moral and spiritual travail of the ages be, after all, so poor a thing? Not to one who knows his *Agamemnon* and his *Antigone*, and his *Isaiah* and his *Hosea*, nor even to one who knows his *Tess* and his *Lord Jim*. And when our modern apostles of moral futility become too impressive there is always *The Trial and Death of Socrates* to be read, as Lord Haldane recommends, and the story of Gethsemane and Calvary.

Christian history is animated by the persistent conviction that life is a desperately serious, even a heroic affair, that it is at heart a moral conflict, a struggle for values that are within man but which are also more-than-human. It is this conviction which has found expression in the great conception of the Last Judgment, in the growth of ecclesiastical systems of discipline, and in the development of such a religious temper as that of Puritanism.

Such is the reading of the book of life that you find in Christianity when you go back of its doctrines to its great intuitions. It is an experience of human life as interpenetrated by a Higher Power accessible to every man in the concrete experiences of his career, a Power which *cares* whether man wins the struggle for values which lie within him but which lead beyond him. This is what Christianity sees at the heart of the human story. And it is because the life of the humblest individual is thus inwrought in that of a more-than-human reality that the individual human is invested in the Christian epic with a surpassing dignity. He is more than a super-simian, the last and cleverest of the apes. He is a child of God, with Eternity in his heart.

To the convinced mechanist this entire Christian conception of life is just romance. But the organic approach gives the matter another setting. And there are those who are beginning to ask whether there is not truth in this historic Christian view which is stranger than fiction.

IV

We have tried to set forth the elements of intellectual outlook and of religious intuition which confront one another today in Western civilization. And because they are frequently found together in the same soul which has perforce a double mind you have this quest for a faith which will unify both outlook and intuitions. It is in this quest that we are engaged—a quest for a faith which will release the soul from the dilemma which cleaves it, harmonize its urges and consolidate its strength. For double personalities cannot meet with success the confusion of our time.

It is because the writer is conscious of affiliations and congenialities which are growing up in his own mind between the intellectual outlook and the religious intuitions which he has described that he has essayed to go on and state the elements of belief which have come to mean most in his own life, hoping that they will represent a tentative effort of Christian experience to move on into the modern world, and to lay hold of characteristic modern interests as new scaffolding for the erection of a more adequate house of faith.

But before we put down these beliefs to which we have come we have two questions to ask which must be answered before we can proceed with confidence. The first question is, What are the tests of the adequate faith which you are seeking? The second, Is not your quest a futile one? Is not religion itself today outgrown?

The first question we shall try to answer at once in the light of all that has come to us from both modern interest and Christian inheritance.

An adequate faith, it seems to us, will keep in living touch with fact. It will neither fear fact nor evade truth. It will probably not be an entirely logical faith.

If it faces candidly the facts of life it cannot be, for no logic has ever organized the facts of life into a consistent system. But faith will at least be on the side of the spirit of discovery and against the spirit of obscurantism.

An adequate faith will pivot on the future as well as on the past. It will learn from ideals which are emerging as well as from those which have passed the zenith of their usefulness. It will be more interested in organizing human life and in directing human destiny than in the accuracy of its own conformity to the traditions of the past.

An adequate faith will meet the needs of men in their most intimate experiences and on the deepest levels of their lives. It will heed the warning contained in the words of Josiah Royce when he said that "a religion which ceases to strengthen hearts and to fulfill the just demands of the human spirit for guidance through the wilderness of this world is doomed." [7] It is because certain conservative types of religion with an antiquated view of history are able to meet this test that they continue in apparent good health while many an attractive liberalism can hardly hold on its gasping way.

An adequate faith will open up new inquiries as well as answer old ones. It will believe with Baron von Hügel that the knowledge of God is "continuously rebeginning."

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[7] Royce, *The Problem of Christianity,* vol. i, p. 385.

And finally, an adequate faith will challenge, lure, and create a tension in the soul. It will be rich and generous, not poor and niggardly. The great religious lives have never tried to see with how little belief they could get along. They have asked much of the universe. They have dreamed greatly, and the sheer greatness of their dream has furnished power to make their dream come true. Peary gave as the reason for the persistence of his efforts to reach the North Pole, "something keeps calling, calling, calling, . . . until . . . you return—spell-drawn by the magic of the North." Such is the lure of a vital faith. It is within yet ever beyond. It is greater than we are and so it commands us. And by a strange paradox, in its service we find perfect freedom.

Now it is an interesting fact that early Christianity satisfied all these tests of religious adequacy. It took account of the facts of contemporary life which Judaism ignored; the fact of Jesus, the world-despair and longing for immortality, the craving for a stable international community when states and empires were crumbling. It looked to the future for vindication with the prayer upon its lips, "Thy kingdom come." Its effect upon the world was to greatly deepen the experiences of the soul, to open up new inner needs, and to reveal ways in which those needs could be met. It released a whole storm of new inquiries about the human drama as we see, for instance, in the letters of Paul. And it produced a tension in men's souls, inspiring them to personal development and social achievement, which has remained one of the most creative forces in human history. "Not that I have already attained, but I press on." "The kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ."

Is it any wonder that when one has caught the spirit of early Christianity he can never entirely escape from it and that it must abide in his experience as a criterion of what religion can and ought to be? Is it any wonder that he can hardly think of creating or inventing a new religion and that all the changes in his belief seem to him only the modification of his religious inheritance?

It is no use for us to try to disengage ourselves from our religious background, its half-lights and its nuances. In a thousand ways that background conditions our faith. And we shall have to state our faith in the forms which it has assumed, regardless of the fact that the generation which is coming on may find some of these forms unadapted to its needs. But just as the amœba incloses the creature which furnishes its food, extruding the skeleton after the usable elements have been absorbed, so we may trust those who come after us to take over that which was of permanent vitality in our faith, discarding the forms in which that faith was held.

To a statement of Christian faith in the light of modernity we shall proceed, but we must first answer the question, why state it at all. Is not this whole matter of religion outgrown?

Yet there can be no denial that the human soul cannot endure without a religion. Impossible it is for it to persist without a dynamic cement to bind together its conflicting desires and clashing instincts and to sustain it against desperation and damnation. The mind and life of modern man is complex beyond the dreams of palæolithian naïveté or Greco-Roman sophistication. More than ever he needs vital beliefs by which to live as a whole personality rather than simply as an occasionally rational animal driven by habits, impulses, compulsions, internal and external.

Without a religion there can, indeed, be no release from the biological imperatives. The biological imperatives are the urgencies of the immediate, the pressures of the present, the irresistible drives of the organs of which we are constituted. Man cannot live by his organs alone. As a dynamic entity, he lives in a universe, with the universe, against the universe.

—Berman, *The Religion Called Behaviorism,* p. 109.

Chapter Four

IS RELIGION OUTGROWN?

Is religion a valid interest of intelligent men today? Has not the advance of the modern world passed it by, so that with all its doctrines, ceremonies, and organizations it is now a vast anachronism and irrelevancy?

No one can read current discussions of religion, especially in the magazines, without realizing that many intellectuals view it with an unconcealed contempt. Baiting the clergy is Mencken's stock in trade and the same procedure produces a best seller for Sinclair Lewis. Spokesmen for the academic world, such as Professors Barnes and Leuba, find it difficult to discover anything praiseworthy in religion. Historic religion according to popular modern descriptions is just a vast mélange of magical technique, primitive world-views, mystic states which result from sexual disappointment and too much alkalinity in the blood, the still small voice of the herd which is mistaken for the voice of God, a fœtid mass of tradition, and a greasy lot of shamans and showmen slightly sublimated as priests and preachers who make their living off the semi-pathological hopes and fears of the multitude. The fact that religion summons advocates from the academic world to attest its intellectual respectability does not help much. Why the protestations? Meanwhile James Harvey Robinson writes the chapter on "Religion" in *Whither Mankind* with his tongue in his cheek. What is the matter?

To answer this question let us glance for a moment at some of the salient features of historic religion and then take up its impeachment by its critics. It will then be in order to ask whether religion gives promise of surviving this assault upon it by the modern temper.

I

The account which anthropologists give of the nature of religion as they find it among primitive peoples is approximately as follows. Religion is man's response to the mysterious "power" (the more vaguely interpreted the better) which he meets and invokes to his inspiriting and practical benefit in the crises of his life. Such crises as birth, youth, marriage, death, and war, the crises connected with food-getting and procreation, with the survival of the individual and the tribe in a more or less hostile environment, constitute the primary occasions of religious practice. The problems of his workaday life primitive man solves by common-sense rule-of-thumb procedure, utilizing the forces of nature which operate in such a clearly observed and regular fashion that he can count upon them. But for the serious crises of his experience these resources do not suffice, and in the mood of strong desire and heightened emotion he invokes the aid of another "power" which he comes upon in the interstices of his experience where his own powers and those of the natural order are not adequate for his needs. This "power," whose extraordinary character, enhanced by the excitement of the crisis, produces on the part of primitive man an emotional response, he comes ultimately to call the "supernatural."

There are thus in the religion of the simpler peoples these three elements which are fairly constant: the sense of mysterious and extraordinary "power"; man's desire for the enhancement and the fulfillment of his life; and the crises, personal and tribal, when man is most conscious of the "power" and of the desire for survival and fuller life which proper adjustment to the "power" will bring. Hopkins stresses the first of these elements in the statement that "what is common to all religions is belief in a superhuman power and an adjustment of human activities to the requirements of that power."[1] In emphasizing the primacy in religion of man's sense of the mysterious power, Hopkins has the support of such investigators as Marett, Söderblom, Goldenwieser, Lowie, and Rudolph Otto. Wieman gives more recognition to the desire for life, in his assertion that the "human drive toward more abundant living is the root of religion in human nature";[2] while Kallen in the following statement features the importance of the religious occasion. "Religious action," he says, "is elicited by crises. It is a mode of behavior resorted to in times of doubt and uncertainty."[3]

Here seem to be the basic factors. Whether we consider the visions of Hebrew prophets or Algonkin braves, the rites of Dionysos or of the Holy Rollers, the initiation ceremonies of South Sea Islanders or the confirmation services of the Roman Catholic Church, a mysterious "power," the desire for life, and a crucial juncture in personal or group experience, seem to be constituents of vital religion. They also seem to be the initial creative elements in the development of the vast structure of religion as custom and institution.

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[1] Hopkins, *History of Religion*, p. 1.

[2] Wieman in *The Journal of Religion*, vol. iii, p. 301.

[3] Kallen, *Why Religion*, p. 41. Pp. 40-46 are à propos.

We cannot stop to indicate how these fundamental factors have united in a myriad of forms, how they have combined with other elements of man's nature to produce a multitude of religious alloys, how they have been conditioned by the culture of the group, the episodes of personal life, and the influence of individual leaders. The "power," for instance, has been consistently interpreted in terms of the social pattern to which men in the various stages of culture have been accustomed. God has been, accordingly, chieftain, patriarch, feudal lord, father, and king. The desire for richer life through religion has run the gamut of the impulses native to man. The character of the crises where man feels his inadequacy has changed in this particular and that. Here we have only wished to point out some of the characteristic features of historic religion in order to ask why intelligent people are critical of it. To that question let us now turn.

II

One of the objections to religion as a legitimate interest of intelligent men is based upon some of the very facts in the nature of primitive religion to which we have just referred. Those who raise this objection say "religion, like magic, is rooted in the 'supernatural' world view of primitive man. Religion at heart is magic. Magic has gone. Religion will go. It persists today simply as the afterglow following the sunset of the 'supernatural.'"

The issue here turns first on the question as to whether religion can be distinguished from magic. What are the distinctions between them? Some authorities find those distinctions very slight. Lowie, for instance, asserts that "no good ground for a sharp division of the two remains." Marett and Goldenwieser point out that magic and religion occupy adjoining compartments in the common world of supernaturalism. Both deal with the mysterious "power." Both develop a mythology, a lore, a set of tabus and observances, which set them off from ordinary life. Upon such discoveries some drop their interest in religion at once, content to point out the persistence of magical elements in the religion of today.

But the matter is hardly that simple. It is true that it is difficult to distinguish pure magic from pure religion in the beliefs and practices of primitive man. Man wanted to get good from the mysterious wonder-working "power" and to escape the ill which the "power" might produce, and he did not stop to label one of his activities magical and the other religious. Nevertheless, the ways in which man sought to gain the possible benefits of the "supernatural" did not remain undifferentiated.

There were, for instance, ways of dealing with the supernatural which were pronounced by the group socially perilous—*e.g.*, witchcraft. There were other ways of dealing with the supernatural which were socially approved.

There were coercive ways of dealing with the supernatural. The "powers" simply had to "come through" with benefits if the proper rites were performed. The entire situation was in the hands of the human agent. The relations between the "power" and the human agent were quasi-mechanical. Then there were ways of dealing with the supernatural which were characterized by supplication and request. The relation here between the human suppliant and the "power" is social rather than mechanical, and the rites involve adjustment to the "power" rather than manipulation or coercion of it.

There were ways of dealing with the "power" which were simply means to specific ends, such as potions, spells, etc. There were also ways which were ends in themselves, such as the initiation ceremonies which enhanced the life of the individual by giving him access to the tribal tradition and to communion with the "power" which he will need in the crises of his life.

Finally, there were ways which one employed for purely individual ends and for which one sought out an expert in those ways. And there were other ways which were the possession of the group, accessible to all its members and participated in by them as a fellowship.

Now in the case of these four pairs of ways of dealing with the mysterious "power," the first of each pair was gradually differentiated out in human experience and labeled magical, while the second was labeled religious.

Of course such a process of differentiation has been gradual (we have merely indicated trends in the process), and in many rites which are labeled religious you have a blend of the magical. Among the Cheyenne Indians, for instance, "the sun dance is at once honorific of the shining deity overhead and a magical fertility rite which if neglected would cause the maize to wither and fail."[4] Forms of prayer are still practiced, moreover, by adherents of the higher religions which in the mechanical certainty with which they are supposed to secure specific results partake of magical quality.

It can hardly be doubted that a predominant factor in the differentiation of magic from religion and in the elimination of magic has been the gradual discovery of its ineffectiveness. On this point Marett makes a pertinent suggestion.

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[4] Robins, *Bulletin of the Colgate-Rochester Divinity School,* vol. 77, p. 449.

> . . . There is . . . a good deal to be said for classing the world's religions either as mechanical and ineffective, or as spiritual and effective. The mechanical kind offers its consolations in the shape of a set of implements. The "virtue" resides in certain rites and formularies. . . . The spiritual kind of religion, on the other hand, which is especially associated with the positive and active functions of life, tends to read will and personality into the wonder-working powers that it summons to man's aid. The will and personality in the worshippers are in need not so much of implements as of more will and personality. They get this from a spiritual kind of religion: which in one way or another always suggests a society, a communion, as at once the means and the end of vital betterment.[5]

Now it must be obvious to all readers of the above that the ineffective religions are those which have most of the magical quality as we have described it —that is, most of the manipulative purpose in relation to the supernatural and most of the mechanical relationship between means and end, while the effective religions are charged with a life-seeking motive which finds expression in the communion of the divine with the human, which in turn creates a fellowship and an enlargement and inspiriting of personality which are their own ends. It is the discovered correlation between the magical and the ineffective which has made the magical more and more synonymous with the obsolete.

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[5] Marett, *Anthropology,* p. 234.

What has happened in history, as far as the supernatural world view of primitive man is concerned, is that the life-enhancing elements of that view have been more and more segregated under the ægis of religion, while the areas which have been dominated by the motive of control and quasi-mechanical procedure have been assimilated into the workaday world of science and common sense. Primitive magic was a kind of pseudo-science of the supernatural in that it was motivated by the purpose of manipulation which operates in modern science and in that it rested to a degree upon the association of observed causes with observed effects (associations which were usually though not always erroneous). Because religion and magic both originated in the undifferentiated world view of primitive supernaturalism many elements of religion have been affected by magical connections. The problem of religion, accordingly, is to get rid of magic and to make alliances with science in every area where the technique of securing specific results by the control of causes becomes important.

In answer to the criticism which identifies religion with magic and hence subjects it to the fate of magic we reply, accordingly, that religion and magic did originate together in the same mental medium of savage society, but even there they did not remain entirely undifferentiated, and in their historical evolution religion has become vastly more than the magic which continues to affect it in part. Religion at bottom is not magic. It approaches the "power" which man meets in the crises of his fate in the mood of appreciation, conciliation, and self-adjustment, and not in that of manipulation and control. Whether there is any power which responds to man in such crises that is more than a figment of his own imagination is a question we shall consider further, both in this chapter and in the next.

III

The question which we have just raised is before us in one of its phases as we consider the psychologist's criticism of religion. The psychologist is likely to tell us in these days that he does not like religion because "it is full of wishful thinking. People believe things in religion just because they wish to believe them. Religious folk, moreover, seek in an imaginary world compensation for frustration in their more solid mundane concerns. The power which they think they meet in crises is a mere projection of their own image, and the communion with that power which they cherish is simply the prolongation of infantile attitudes into adulthood which they ought to have outgrown."

Here is a whole battery of present-day criticism of religion, and criticism which thinkers like Kirsopp Lake consider the most serious of all because it challenges the reality of the "power" with which religion has to do.[6] "Wishful thinking," "compensation," "projection," and "infantile attitudes"—there is the battery. We do not hope to silence it; only the larger experience of living on the assumption that religion can be reduced to such terms could do that. Nor are we anxious to silence such objections to religious concern altogether, for as they operate upon the religious consciousness of our time they are likely to expose certain positions of religion which are untenable. But we should like to tear a little of the camouflage off this battery and allow a few "wild doubts of doubt" to manœuver over its position.

Religious people, accordingly, are charged with thinking what they wish to think. Well, what thinking is there worthy of the name which is not wishful? Is not the fact that man thinks at all due to his wishing? Does not mind emerge in the long story of evolution in the efforts of the baffled humanoid to

[6] Lake, *The Earlier Epistles of Paul,* p. 251.

extricate himself from a "blocked" situation, tinkering with everything movable in it in order to secure release for his frustrated desires. If man finds religion in a crisis where a lot of wishes are tearing at the bar to their fulfillment, man has only to remember that there was the place that he originally found his mind. It is the distinction of man as a creature that he has so many wishes which are reaching out into every unknown to organize it for his benefit. William James pointed out years ago that in the quest of man to satisfy a multitude of wishes which from the animal point of view were fantastic and superfluous lay the secret of his creativity. No wonder man feels that his most vital wishes are to be trusted. "Prune down his extravagance, sober him, and you undo him." [7]

This does not mean that in religion or in any other realm man is to think that which is contrary to known fact just because it is pleasant to do so. It does mean, however, that as between alternative beliefs where the choice is intellectually open, man is justified by his historical experience in choosing the one which his own support and loyalty will help his desires to actualize. It means also that where the intellectual situation is chaotic and facts are unobtainable, and decision and action on the basis of some assumption is important, man is justified in fastening upon those elements in the situation which he can grasp, and in organizing them in such a way as to strengthen his morale. This is exactly the procedure in all successful achievement. The creative thinker or man of affairs forces the issue among the unknowns. He knows that he may make mistakes and may be following illusions, but to do nothing, to believe nothing, to throw no spell of faith over the unknowns, would be the greatest mistake of all. So Columbus seized upon the contention of Cardinal Pierre d'Ailly that only one-seventh of the earth's surface was covered with water, to prove that the coast of eastern Asia could not be far from the shores of western Europe. It proved to be an illusory belief. But the facts were beyond the reach of anyone at the time and why should he not take the view which fitted into his deepest intuitions and which would enable his dearest wishes to find fulfillment?

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[7] James' essay on "Reflex Action and Theism" in *The Will to Believe.*

Now there are religious beliefs which are of this same general character. Pasteur, whom President Charles W. Eliot called "the greatest scientist by far of the nineteenth century," confessed to such a belief at the bedside of his dying daughter. "I know only scientifically determined truth," he said, "but I am going to believe what I wish to believe, what I cannot help but believe. I expect to meet this dear child again in another world."[8] It is perfectly obvious what Pasteur was doing. Among the various possible views of the future life he was seizing upon those elements which agreed with the deep organic urges of his own nature and which maintained his morale as a vital creative human being. Is that not a perfectly valid procedure? One wonders what masochistic trend is at work in the mentality of those who, of all possible views, prefer that which is most highly charged with futility and despair. Such persons seem to have forgotten that the primary biological function of thought is human survival, the maintenance of human morale, the invention of new ways of enhancing human life. It is not the wishful thinkers of religion, but its critics, who ignore this fact.

The charge that religious belief is "compensatory" is one of those blanket indictments which undertake too much. Who of us is not compensating for some weakness or inferiority? Experiments with university students reveal that practically all of them have a sense of inferiority in some realm or other. For the human being to seek compensation for this frustration or inferiority is only normal. Burke said that you cannot indict a nation nor can you indict ordinary human nature for the presence of an almost universal trait.

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[8] Quoted by Eliot in *Religion and Modern Life* (Scribners, 1927), p. 11.

The fact is, moreover, that it is under the driving sense of frustration or inferiority that many of the most notable triumphs in art, science, and practical affairs have been wrought. Jewish scholars have pointed out, for instance, how the sense of social limitations has stimulated the interest of Jewish youth in intellectual achievement. People seek compensation in many realms. Why not in a realm as rich and satisfying as that of religion? Why should not Paul's "thorn in the flesh" work itself out in a vast spiritual ambition and a conquering faith (if the matter is to be so conceived) as well as in the writing of a poem, the painting of a picture, or the launching of a revolution?

The sound element in this criticism, that religion is compensatory, is the fact that in many instances religion does act as a way of escape from practical affairs and that consequently it drains off energies which ought to be used in changing the mundane situation. "Religion is the opium of the people" is a slogan of the communists. "You'll get your pie in the sky" is the ironic encouragement of the radical orator to the unemployed. So far as the anæsthetic quality of religion frustrates its world-transforming energies, it is a menace, and the objection to religion which we are considering finds its strength in that fact. It is a legitimate criticism of a religion of escape, and too much religion is of that nature.

The view that the "power" which man meets in religion is but the "projection" of his own shadow upon the screen of his non-human environment, a mental idol which he has made to satisfy his own longing for cosmic companionship, is a familiar one in the literature of the period. To many it seems the greatest obstacle to theistic faith.

It is a criticism of the validity of religion which seems difficult to answer because man has no language which seems adapted to describe the "power" which he meets in religion except that which is drawn from his intercourse with his fellow-humans. He cannot escape from projecting his ideas and experience, himself in fine, upon the "power." The question is, is the "power" a real "other," apart from the projecting process, which lends its substance to the image-making capacities of man? Does man merely project God, or does he also discover Him?

There are two suggestions which we should like to offer in connection with this criticism. The first is that the physicists are in much the same situation in relation to the order of nature that religious men are in relation to the power that they meet in the world of the spirit. The popular view formerly was that the laws of nature were of the substance of nature itself. But the new physics is infected with skepticism. It tells us that these laws for the most part are mere correlations in the mind of the physicist between quantitative measures which he has projected upon nature. "The mind has by its selective power fitted the processes of nature into a frame of law of a pattern largely of its own choosing." Accordingly, Eddington continues, "the most typical natural laws (like the law of the conservation of energy) are of the nature of truisms, and the controlling laws of the basal structure (if there are any) are likely to be of a different type from any yet conceived."[9]

What does the scientist do in this situation where he discovers such an unmistakable subjective reference in all his interpretations of nature? Does he throw up the sponge with the cry, "It is all mere projection?" No, he goes on in faith, believing that it cannot be all mere projection, that he could not succeed so well in imposing order upon a nature in which no order existed. In other words, nature has responded to the ordering process of the mind, and in the fulfillment of his predictions and in his experience of controlling her processes the scientist feels that nature has given him assurance that the ordering process to which man subjects her is not without her coöperation.

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[9] Eddington, *The Nature of the Physical World,* p. 244.

Now the intelligent religious person is perfectly willing to grant that in all his conceptions of the "power" of the spiritual world there is the projection of human experience upon a medium imperfectly adapted to it. But just as nature has responded to the ordering approach of the mind, so the "power" has responded to the social approach of the human spirit. And just as the scientist feels that he is not putting all the order into nature, so the religious man feels in the crisis that he is not putting all the responsive quality into God. If the social quality is not in the divine, why is it that, as Marett has already pointed out, the religions which stress it are most effective? It is interesting that the scientist to whom we are already so indebted, Professor A. S. Eddington, feels that the inference we have drawn is an essentially valid one, for he says: "We have to build the spiritual world out of symbols taken from our own personality as we build the scientific world out of the metrical symbols of the mathematician."[10]

The other suggestion we have to offer in partial answer to the criticism that religious belief is mere projection comes from our experience with other mental processes. In the case of other mental mechanisms we have both a subjective and an objective reference. Take the dream mechanism, for instance. It is a commonplace of present-day interpretation of dreams to speak of the whole thing as a subjective affair. And yet who has not had the experience of being asleep on some summer morning mentally busy with some dream fantasy which seemed a pure figment of the imagination, only to discover, after waking, that in a strange fashion the colors of the dawn, the rustling of the leaves, and the call of the birds had been woven into the dream texture. There was an outward reference in the dream, as well as an inward reference.

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[10] Eddington, *The Nature of the Physical World,* pp. 337, 338.

The point is that from the dream side, the sleep side of that experience you could not prove there was any outward reference. It was only after waking you discovered that while it was dream it was not all dream. There was in the dream a penetration of the actual environment.

I confess to much the same feeling about the psychologist's analysis of man's long experience with the divine as mere projection. It is projection necessarily and inevitably so, but it is not all projection. And just as the larger experience with dream and waking states enables one to confirm the environmental reference in the dream, so we may believe that larger experience with religion, especially in its association with science, will gradually enable us to fasten on those aspects of man's experience with God in which the human most surely meets a divine response.

There is one more objection to religion which comes to us from the psychologists, especially those of the psycho-analytic school, which we must notice. It is that the social experience of the religious man with the divine is simply a case of infantile attitudes prolonged into adulthood. Again let us admit the partial truth of this stricture. There are saccharine elements of religious devotion, there are hymns of sickly sentimentality, there are morbid states in which people pout like spoiled children of God. The compensatory and the regressive trends coöperate to create an unreal world of religious fantasy. All this is true.

But it is not all the truth, even about the infantile attitude. There is a naïveté in vital religion which is of its very essence. There is a wonder in the presence of the mystery of life, an eagerness for life itself, and a belief in its goodness, a responsiveness to the best which calls to man from the heart of the mystery, a following on trustfully when a man has found the answer to his soul's desire; there is a whole group of attitudes in the highest type of religion which is indeed the prolongation of the child spirit into adulthood.

But what would you? Religion is not the only realm where the child spirit appears and is even considered an asset. Did not the tough-minded Thomas H. Huxley say something about sitting down before fact as a little child and being willing to follow where it led if one would get on with science? Does not Bertrand Russell inform us that the same spirit holds the secret of art? "Not only is artistic achievement not cumulative, but it seems even to depend upon a certain freshness and naïveté of impulse and vision which civilization tends to destroy."[11] Does not Charles Horton Cooley advise us that "the more you become like a little child the more hope there is of your discovery, at last, what art really is."[12] "Like a little child"—strangely reminiscent, those words, of one who found in the same spirit the door to the Kingdom of Heaven. And the man who loses that spirit, be his field science, art, or religion, is like the man whom Carlyle describes as having lost his sense of wonder, "a Pair of Spectacles, behind which there is no Eye."

The psycho-analysts in their treatment of religion will have to make a distinction between an infantilism which is morbid or pathological and a childlike spirit which is of the very essence of creation and discovery. For to sweep together the religious faith of a Balfour and a Bryce, a Pupin and a Compton, a Charles W. Eliot and a William Rainey Harper, a Beatrice Webb and a Helen Keller, an R. H. Tawney and an Albert Schweitzer—to sweep together the religious outlook and experience of such human beings, dub it "infantilism" and dismiss it all with a shrug of the shoulders, is surely one of the most insolent, even if it is at present one of the most popular ways of taking the name of science in vain.

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[11] Russell, *Mysticism and Logic,* p. 43.

[12] Cooley, *Life and the Student,* p. 136.

In reference to the entire field of the psychological criticism of religion two things are clear. One is that the psycho-analysts in particular must refine and test their categories far more completely than they have done up to the present time. The psychiatrist, Edward J. Kempf, is reported to have said that if you would take a single mental case and submit it in turn to twenty different psycho-analysts for individual study, and then compare their reports, the entire structure of the science would collapse. Whether or not this be true, we cannot forget what Bernard, Kantor, and Allport did to the "instincts" of McDougall. Certainly the distinction must be drawn between the normal and the abnormal, and between the functioning in religion of human nature at its best and at its worst. As psychology develops in these directions it may possibly become the ally of religion instead of its enemy.

In the second place, it is clear that while psychology may give us the mechanism of religion, it can never give us its significance. The more scientific psychology becomes the more this will be true. For analysis of the mechanism of any process means boring into the subdivisions of it which grow ever more minute, and as a subject in science is subdivided, specialization becomes ever more rigorous, so that expert knowledge of any part makes a grasp of the whole more difficult. It is the failure to recognize this difficulty which is responsible for C. D. Broad's remark to the effect that the nonsense which philosophers talk about science is only equaled by the nonsense which scientists talk about philosophy.[13] Most scientists recognize, accordingly, a division of labor in the intellectual world, and consider it their function simply to furnish a description of the "how" of the process that they study, leaving to others the problem of the "why," the problem of the meaning and significance of the process in the larger context of life.

The final verdict as to the validity of religion will be given by the vast amorphous practical experience of mankind dealing with a myriad issues of concrete personal and social life. If there the sense of a "power," mysterious though it be, coöperating with man in his desire for ever larger life, gives him support in the crises of his fate, those who have that sense will tend to survive and propagate both themselves and their belief. Such men will feel that their faith is justified by its fruits, and that it is the deeper forces of life which have thrust forth this projection of man's image upon the universe and have then illumined with spiritual reality the mental mirror in which man has sought a glimpse of the face of the Eternal. Life, not psychology, will have the last word on the value and the validity of religion.

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[13] Muirhead, *Contemporary British Philosophy,* First Series, p. 96.

IV

There is a final objection to religion on the part of many intelligent people, more widespread in its influence than those which have been cultivated within the specialized areas of anthropology and psychology. It is a suspicion rather than an objection—the suspicion that the scientific approach to life, being incompatible with that of religion, is destined to displace the latter.

It is the conviction of the writer that this suspicion is based fundamentally on a misunderstanding of the respective fields of science and religion, and that a more adequate mutual understanding is possible. Such an understanding must be achieved if men of science are to feel at home in religion, and men of religion in science.

The respective fields of science and religion may be compared at least roughly if we put to these great human interests, in turn, one question, "What kind of knowledge do you seek?"

An answer to this question from the point of view of science is suggested by a statement of Professor Osterhout of Harvard in reference to the objectives of a botanist. He says:

> It is evident that the simplest living cell is a machine of great complexity. This is only another way of saying that we have a great many factors or variables to deal with. If we can measure each of these we may hope to arrive at a clear picture of the life processes of a cell and to express them in a definite manner, preferably in mathematical form. If we can do this we may also hope to predict the course of life processes as we predict the course of the tides, which also involves a great many variables. We need not despair of the power of the human mind to deal with such a large number of variables, providing each of them can be measured. Our task then is clearly defined. It is to measure each of the factors or variables which

determine life processes, to the end that we may imitate, predict, and control the activities of the organism.[14]

From this statement, which is capable of wide substantiation beyond the special field of botany, it is perfectly clear what the purpose of science is. It is the prediction and control of the processes of nature. Now science has discovered that "prediction and control (accepting these as the criteria of science) are possible on the basis of knowledge which is exact and verifiable only in so far as it is quantitative." [15] The great advances in engineering and medicine, for instance, are due primarily to the spread of quantitative studies, and the statistical interest among the social sciences and behaviorism in psychology are a part of the same movement.

The concrete analogies, moreover, by which scientists describe their objectives are just as redolent of the mathematical as their more abstruse statements. Eddington compares the relation of scientific knowledge to reality as being like the relation of pointer readings on a variety of dials to the living being who is being measured. Lillie, a zoölogist, uses the simile of the relation of a map drawn to scale, to the country which it represents. Professor Clarence Case, a sociologist, suggests as an analogy the relation between the information contained in a rancher's ledger and the cattle on a thousand hills.[16] The goal of science in its statement of truth is evidently quantitative.

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[14] Osterhout, *The Nature of Life,* pp. 88, 89.

[15] Lillie, "The Scientific View of Life," in the *Journal of Philosophy*, vol. xxv, p. 599.

Science is aware of another powerful motive driving it in the direction of quantitative method, a motive which proceeds not from the point of view of the object of knowledge, but from that of the subject. Who is it that is to possess the knowledge of science? On this question science has also clear convictions. Science aims, according to Eddington, at knowledge which consists of "the element common to all human experience separated from the merely individual elements in that experience."[17] Science aims, in other words, at knowledge which is verifiable by any competent person under the appropriate circumstances, and thus is capable of becoming universal. Again it is mathematical knowledge par excellence which is most completely devoid of subjective bias and individual interpretation, and which approaches most nearly the standard of the universally accessible.

Now I think that we are ready to answer the question, "What kind of knowledge does science seek." It seeks knowledge of the repetitive, the constant and hence measurable aspects of nature. It seeks knowledge which in ideal may be universal, common to man as a species. It seeks such knowledge by quantitative methods (either inductive and statistical or experimental) in order that man may be able to predict and control the operation of the forces of nature.

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[16] Case in *Sociology and Social Research*, vol. xii, p. 334.

[17] Eddington in *Science, Religion, and Reality*, p. 196.

This summary statement makes clear where it is that we pass out of the area of strictly scientific knowledge. We pass out of it in the first place when we turn from the knowledge of the repeated and typical, the elements which can be abstracted from nature for the purposes of measurement to the knowledge of the concrete and the individual. Scientists themselves are conscious of the limited applicability of their special methods to all the objects of knowledge. Professor Lillie, for instance, tells us that as long as the unique or individual qualities of an organism are slight as compared with the typical or class qualities, science may be an adequate instrumentality in dealing with the organism for all practical purposes. "But when, as in the case of many living beings—especially human beings—individualization is highly pronounced, a purely scientific consideration has a corresponding limited application." As we rise in the scale of being, this limitation becomes more pronounced, until at last "life in its highest manifestations—of individuality and value—is inaccessible to science." In this case he says science, the philosophy of class, must be supplemented by ethics and æsthetics the philosophies of value. "Both are needed for a complete characterization of reality." [18]

If those who are themselves scientists and working in the realm of theory are conscious of the inadequacy of rigid scientific procedure for grappling with reality as a whole, those whose interest is practical are all the more conscious of it. Knowledge of human situations, for instance, demands much more than the efforts of the statistician sitting down with census reports and getting out his graphs and charts. It requires such a many-sided contact with life and the penetration of so many faculties and sensibilities into the social material that he who confines himself to the study or the laboratory is likely, as Cooley tells us, to mistake objectivity for blindness.[19]

Intelligence, the grasp of life in natural wholes, is an infinitely rich experience, combining the obvious and the subtle, the typical and the individual, the abstract and the concrete, learning with doing, the method of detachment with the method of participation, and quantitative measurements with qualitative discernments which can hardly be put into words, let alone figures.

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[18] Lillie in the *Journal of Philosophy,* vol. xxv, p. 606.

[19] Cooley, *Life and the Student,* p. 155.

You pass from the area of pure science, moreover, when you turn from the area of knowledge which is capable of being universally known, verifiable by external tests accessible to all, to the knowledge which is intimate and personal but none the less real. Take the experience of human love, for instance. You may examine love between the sexes from the point of view of physiology, and find with Haeckel merely the chemical affinity of germ cell for germ cell. You may analyze it psychologically and tell us about complexes, fixations, and the psychic effervescence of glandular activities. But when you read Mrs. Browning's Sonnet from the Portuguese, beginning with the lines—

> The face of all the world is changed,
> I think,
> Since first I heard the footsteps of thy soul—

you come upon something you can never put into a scientific formula. Or you may take the cry of a father over his dying boy, as Unamuno suggests, and describe it in terms of acoustics but there is something in the cry which physics will never disclose. There is in that cry all of the personal relations of father and son, all the memories of their years together which are unique and can never be duplicated, all their intimacies, their little secrets, their shared happiness. That utterly individual history of those two lives filled with specific concrete events which they alone know is all there. Science, neither physical nor psychological, can ever come near that cry, but, "O Absalom, my son, my son Absalom," has a light to throw upon the nature of the world which is perhaps just as significant as anything that happens in a test-tube. The light that it throws, it throws from the experience of an individual which in the nature of the case is not entirely accessible to another human being.

And finally, we pass from the area of science when we pass from domination by the motives of prediction and control. There is an entire range of motives in life which are not of this variety. Preëminent among these other motives are those which pervade the appreciating and the valuing aspects of our existence. A man may analyze a wine and he may drink it. He may study sex and he may experience it. He may map a landscape and he may paint it. He may describe a storm in terms of the velocity of the wind, the fall of his thermometer and his barometer, and he may also allow the storm to pass through his soul and be transmuted into the Overture of *William Tell*. He may study infantile mortality in government tables and he may feel the agony of bereft women down the ages as he listens to Schumann-Heink sing, after the mothers of the slain children of Bethlehem, "Death, let me in." He can know saintliness as it is described by Leuba and he can live his life under the inspiration of a saint's memory. He can stand over against the universe and seek to manipulate it and he can close with the universe as holding all that is precious to him and seek to share its deepest and noblest trends.

There are attitudes appropriate to science and a kind of knowledge which the universe yields in response to those attitudes. And there are other attitudes, preëminently the attitudes of appreciation and valuation, to which men are driven by the urge of life, and there is a kind of knowledge which the universe yields in response to those attitudes. But the attitudes are not the same, the kinds of knowledge are not identical, nor can one kind be substituted for the other.

V

Now as we think back over the kinds of knowledge which are within the area of science and then consider the kinds of knowledge which are accessible to religion, it is evident that religion does seem to start at the opposite pole of knowing from the pole of science.

A typical experience of vital religion may illustrate the characteristics of religious knowledge. Isaiah describes such an experience in the sixth chapter of his prophecy. That experience we note started within the soul of an individual. "In the year that King Uzziah died I saw the Lord." Here was a bit of knowledge intimate and personal, almost incommunicable. It was a knowledge, moreover, of no abstracted parts of anything, of no events arranged in classes or types, but an experience startling and unique in its concreteness which swept the prophet, his world and the Eternal, into one panoramic whole. And in that sacred Presence Isaiah was certainly not thinking of how he could either manipulate or control it. He was conscious only of a deep longing to have it control him. To dedicate himself to that Eternal Righteousness whose purifying Presence filled the temple seemed the meaning of his life. "I heard the voice of the Lord saying, Whom shall I send and who will go for us? Then said I, Here am I; send me." There is religion.

"Religion is what the individual does with his solitariness." Religion is "that sense of something greater than ourselves with which we may identify ourselves." Religion is "man's whole bearing toward what seems to him the Best, or Greatest." Religion is a "passion for righteousness and the spread of righteousness felt as a cosmic demand." "To be one with the supreme good in the faith that is also will—that is religion."[20] The language is the language of moderns, but the experience it describes is the experience of vital religion across the centuries of which the incident in the life of Isaiah is typical.

What shall we say, then, of the kind of knowledge that emerges in such an experience of religion? Certainly it is not a knowledge that one can put readily into a formula and universalize. Being in its origin the hard-won knowledge of individuals either in solitude or in intimate associations where men have faced the crises of life together, it is not readily transferable except to people who pass through concrete experiences similar to those out of which these religious insights have been born.

Oh could I tell ye surely would believe it!
  Oh could I only say what I have seen!
How should I tell or how can ye receive it,
  How, till he bringeth you where I have been?

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[20] These statements are, in order, from Whitehead, *Religion in the Making,* p. 47; Catlin, *The Science and Method of Politics,* pp. 60, 61; Stratton, *Psychology of the Religious Life,* p. 343; Hocking in *Religion and Modern Life,* pp. 350, 351; and Bosanquet, *What Religion Is,* p. 79.

As religious knowledge assumes fixed doctrinal form it spreads more easily and also more superficially. A common culture, as in the Græco-Roman world, may make an entire society religiously permeable. Propagandists satisfied with the substitution of intellectual assent for the sharing of primary experiences may succeed in plastering a common religious label over an extraordinary variety of cults. Mexican peons and New England Brahmins may finally discover that they are listed in the same column in statistical summaries of the religions of mankind. But let no one be deceived. The soil from which is dug all precious religious knowledge, the spiritual metal which in a thousand alloys and debased forms may become the common coin of a world faith, consists of the souls of individuals. For really creative knowledge in religion men pay an individual price. That is why all new religions and all reformations and revivals of old religions must start in individuals.

In reference to the object of religious knowledge, it is clear both from Isaiah and from the comments of the modern thinkers whom we have quoted that the object is no abstracted part of life dissected out for purposes of analysis and description. In Isaiah's vision you are impressed with the fact that the whole of life has suddenly descended upon him. What he knows is a whole focused in a Best and Greatest, and that Best and Greatest illumines everything else in Isaiah's world. It casts a flood of light upon his time. It shines right down into the depths of the prophet's own soul.

What new knowledge does the prophet bring out of such an experience? Knowledge of the wholeness of life, of his own life in particular, knowledge of its significance, its perspective, its direction as it moves within the orbit of a larger whole.

But again it is a whole seen from the prophet's individual point of view. He can only commend it to others. He cannot force it upon them by the iron logic of any external test. As others share more and more of his experience they may also share more and more the vision of the whole that he sees, and hence share his religion. There is a Promethean quality about the creative religious souls. They wrest from heaven their own vision of the whole and it proves to be a fire which kindles similar visions adown the centuries. In its essence, however, the following statement by Professor Dewey seems profoundly true, true for the humblest as well as the greatest: "Religion as a sense of the whole is the most individualized of all things, the most spontaneous, indefinable, and varied." [21]

It is in the individuality of the object of its knowledge as well as in its subject that religion seems to stand at the opposite pole from science. It is science rather than religion that has a right to the motto "*ubique idem.*" A genuine community of religious knowledge is, accordingly, a growing coalescence of varied individual experiences rather than a uniform experience to be secured by the application of a common creedal formula.[22]

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[21] Dewey, *Human Nature and Conduct,* p. 331.

Finally, there is an important difference between religious knowledge and that of science, which comes from the difference in the motivation of the two experiences. To the religious man engaged in his most characteristic act, that of dedicating himself to the Best and Greatest, the facts of life have an entirely different orientation than they have for one who is concerned either with describing or controlling something. It is this new orientation of old elements of knowledge that is one of the most important results of the religious experience. As Sir Henry Jones puts it, "It is possible that religion is not so much an introduction of new facts (although it may be) as a new light upon the familiar facts of the previous secular life. . . . It is not a change of scene that religion brings. It opens the eyes of the looker-on." [23] "Whereas I was blind, now I see," is the cry of the religious soul in the presence of the old that has become new. We need scarcely suggest that a characteristic element in most new knowledge is the discovery of new relations. Just as the same chemical element in new combinations and proportions may be transformed from a poison into a tonic, so the morale-shattering facts of experience may be transformed by religion into actual incentives to spiritual achievement. Again the orientation of the facts of life which the motives of religion effect is wrought within the soul of the individual.

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[22] We do not wish to discount communal experience as a powerful factor in the rise and development of the religion of the individual. We are simply pointing out here those aspects of religion which distinguish it most clearly from science.

In reply to the question, accordingly, what kind of knowledge do science and religion seek, we have tried to suggest the characteristic answers of both of these great human interests. From knowledge of the abstracted class or type, to knowledge of unique and concrete wholes, from knowledge which is accessible to man as a species to knowledge which belongs primarily to the intimate experience of man as an individual, from motives of control to motives of appreciation, this is the transit of life as it moves from the field of science to the field of religion. Does this mean that science and religion are irreconcilable? Not at all; it means simply that science and religion represent different areas of the one human experience. Life is not a circle at whose center either science or religion can ever displace the other. It is an ellipse with science and religion as the two foci. Science is the focus today of the entire effort of man as a species to master the forces of his world. Religion is the focus of the effort of man as an individual to find the meaning and value of his life. The religious man must use science as the most powerful instrument man has devised for adapting means to ends. The scientist must invoke the moods of religion that life may not lose its significance for the world of human creatures in whose behalf he labors.

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[23] Jones, *A Faith that Enquires,* p. 34.

VI

What of the future of religion in a scientific age? Is it destined to disappear? Not as long as man as an individual has the capacity to sit down and face the problem of his fate. The ideas of religion may suffer "a sea-change into something rich and strange." The impulses of human nature which are accorded places of honor at the board of religion may shift. Great religious institutions may break up. Traditions may pass whose fading from our world will seem almost irreparable. But the roots of religion are in the souls of men wrestling with their fate, and nowhere else. There the forces of life surge up against the barriers of doubt and bewilderment, seeking release. And there men ultimately come upon a Best which, taking form amid the chaos of their world, illumines and orders it. In its service their souls find freedom and fulfillment and their world a meaning.

The permanence of the religious need may be illustrated perhaps by the aviator's need of a horizon line to direct his course, to fix his position, and to tell him even whether he is driving right side up. Just as Commander Byrd confesses that the hour of supreme dismay in all his flying experience was that hour over France during the flight to Paris when the fog prevented him from knowing anything about his position, so the men of our time will uncover a deeper despair than their fathers ever knew if with all our comforts and luxuries they fail to ask the question, "Where are we and whither are we going?"

It is true that there are forces at work in our world today which tend to keep men from asking such a question, forces which would turn men into mere animals, living in the gregarious pleasures of the moment. People of that kind Mr. Wells describes in the following passage:

> Circumstances may have made Dickon and me rather tougher and more refractory stuff than most of our class, less afraid to lie awake at night and look what used to be called the Eternities in the face. . . . There is a great dread of lying awake at night manifest everywhere. The activity to escape mental solitude is remarkable. Most of the rushing about in motor-cars is plainly due to that. The rich ageing Americans in particular seem constantly in flight across the Atlantic from something that is always, nevertheless, waiting for them on the other side, whichever side it happens to be. There would not be all this vehement going to and fro if they were not afraid of something that sought them in the quiet places. And what else can that something be but just these questions that have confronted us. There is only a little handful of water left now. What do you mean to do with it? What under the stars is the meaning of your life?
>
> "Oh hell!" they say at the first intimation of that whisper. "Where are we going tomorrow?" [24]

These are people who have lost their horizon line. There may be whole generations which will share their fate, who will only cry out for speed, more speed, that in the noise of their motors the loss of the sense of the whither and why of their going may be forgotten.

But sooner or later, if man can remain an individual in our machine civilization, he will hear the whisper which Mr. Wells suggests and seek once more a horizon line in the universal life which will tell him the meaning of his existence. It is because religion is man's effort to discover such a meaning that William James ventures to speak of it in one of his letters as "mankind's most important function." [25]

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[24] Wells, *The World of William Clissold,* vol. i, pp. 356, 357.

It is for landmarks of faith on the spiritual horizon line of the ages that we shall now turn to look. If our generation can find and establish such landmarks, it may yet find its way into such convictions of the dignity and significance of life as will save it from the abyss of futility into which it now threatens to fall.

[25] *Letters of William James,* vol. ii, p. 127.

Men believe in God or in providence not because there are ample proofs of their existence, but because it seems so unbelievable that our fate has no significance beyond ourselves or forms no part of a wider plan that might explain it. And men believe in the uniformity of nature, not because there is ample proof of its existence, but because it seems so unbelievable that any event should occur in isolation. Tucked away in most of us, in spite of resolute professions of intellectual emancipation from all the foibles and weaknesses of mankind, is the solid conviction that in the nature of things there is something, no matter whether it is ever found or not, which, if found, would render intelligible to us this sorry scheme of things entire. It seems preposterous to profess that the world is utterly without rhyme or reason in itself, that it is devoid of significance and intelligibility, while yet we thoughtfully seek to discover in it a way of life which can be justified as intelligent and rational. A profession like that has the marks of irrationality about it. It is like insisting jointly on an obligation and its futility.

—WOODBRIDGE, *The Realm of Mind,* p. 51.

Chapter Five

GOD THE SUPREME ISSUE

We have sought to answer thus far two of the questions with which we stated at the beginning, we were concerned in this book. First, what are the forces which are producing a new religious mind, what are the elements which may possibly enter into the building of a new house of faith? Second, is religion outgrown? In answer to that question we have tried to describe the nature of religion and to point out the validity of the religious approach to truth and life.

We now turn to our third main question. Granting that religion is a valid interest of intelligent men and women today, what can they believe? What might be some of the essential constituents of a faith at once both reasonable and Christian? With this question we shall be occupied in this chapter and the following three.

The central issue which we face in this connection has already been foreshadowed in previous chapters.

It is embodied in the query, "Can we believe in God?"

How sharply the issue in answer to this question is already drawn may be illustrated by the following quotations. The first is from *The World Tomorrow* of January, 1927, where Mr. Brent Dow Allinson interprets the mind of youth in various nations. He says: "To those who have eyes to see it is evident that young men and women of college age and college experience do not think of God naturally or sympathetically. He is more than a stranger to them. They do not think of turning to Him and far less to any ecclesiastic for comfort. They are far too proud, too contemptuous, too analytical, too suspicious of anything that savors of evangelical or propagandist 'bilge and blather' and too imbued with the attitudes, if not the austere nobility, of science to accept any such Comforter or Bogey."

The second quotation is from a posthumous poem written by the late Walter Rauschenbusch, the saintly exponent of a religion both liberal and humane, one who was deeply sympathetic with those for whom Mr. Allinson speaks. The poem is entitled, *The Little Gate to God*. We shall use only a few lines:

In the castle of my soul
Is a little postern gate,
Whereat, when I enter,

I am in the presence of God.
In a moment, in the turning of a thought,
I am where God is.
This is a fact.

When I enter into God,
All life has a meaning,
Without asking I know;
My desires are even now fulfilled,
My fever is gone
In the great quiet of God.
My troubles are but pebbles on the road,
My joys are like the everlasting hills.

So it is when my soul steps through the postern gate
Into the presence of God.
Big things become small, and small things become great.
The near becomes far, and the future is near.
The lowly and despised is shot through with glory.

God is the substance of all revolutions;
When I am in Him, I am in the Kingdom of God
And in the Fatherland of my Soul.

There is the issue. To those whose attitude is expressed by Mr. Allinson, God is an outgrown character of mythology. To those, whose sentiments are voiced by Walter Rauschenbusch, God is the dynamic of progress, the central reality of a forward-moving life.

It is difficult to exaggerate the importance of this issue to the modern world. With the philosophically minded it raises the question whether the universe is simply a celestial monster

> of magnitude without a shape,
> Hanging amid deep wells of nothingness;

or is it instinct with a conscious Spirit to which man may feel akin. To churchmen the issue signals an attack upon the last bulwark of historic religion. The mass of people sense vaguely that upon this issue is staked the worth and ultimate happiness of their existence. Until the decision on this issue moves definitely in one direction or the other the intellectual and spiritual life of Western civilization will continue to be a chaos without unifying pattern.

What other issue involving the Christian faith furnishes a more serious incentive to take stock of the specific forces which are producing it and to appraise the situation which they are creating? Toward such an inventory and appraisal the following pages constitute a preliminary venture.

I

First of all, what are the forces which account for the substance and the temper of the negative answer to our question offered through Mr. Allinson?

As far as the traditional belief in God is concerned, the most important factor in emasculating its influence is probably the spread through Western society of the mechanistic view of nature. This view, which is the product both of machine technology and laboratory science, affects the spiritual outlook of workers and intellectuals alike.

By a vast number of the working people, particularly in Russia, Western and Central Europe and the Latin countries, God is conceived as a symbolic functionary of the ruling class. Proletarians generally regard God with mingled contempt and fear, much as the early Christians regarded the heathen deities which had been metamorphosed into demons. Only in this modern instance God is opposed as a symbol and instrument of economic and political oppression rather than as an actual malevolent being whose power can be neutralized by sacramental means. Among the class-conscious workers, accordingly, disbelief in God is largely conditioned by their attitude toward the aristocratic and bourgeois State and Church which advertise themselves as His agencies.

The historical contingency which has connected the rejection of God with the rejection of specific political and ecclesiastical institutions would not be so serious, however, if the everyday experience of the workers tended to recreate the traditional faith. But it is notorious that the contrary appears to be the case. The industrial order of society, in which the modern machine-tender participates, has not been so favorable to his ancestral belief in God as the more primitive agricultural order which preceded it.

In the pre-scientific agricultural era man lived more or less at the mercy of the seemingly arbitrary forces of nature. Arbitrary ills suggested arbitrary remedies. If the crops wilted from the drought, if murrain attacked the cattle, if an epidemic came to the village, the answer was God. Life was a precarious affair and God with His gracious personal favors was the panacea for misfortune.

The machine-worker today lives in a world which, in its outward circumstances, is far more thoroughly regularized than that of his rural ancestor. When the worker is ill, he invokes the scientific knowledge of the physician, not the touch of the priest. His method for improving his condition is not the old procedure of seeking personal favor characteristic of the patriarchal family and government by monarchs. It is the method of self-education, labor organization, and public propaganda. And day by day, during his hours of work, he secures his results by associating with powerful impersonal tools, to whose mechanical movements he must adjust his own. It is significant that when the machine-tender revolts, he revolts against a "system" and that he looks for his industrial salvation, to the installation of a new "system." The impersonal enginery of production and the economic determinism associated with it have filled the worker's mind with many subtle suggestions hostile to the traditional spiritual outlook. The machine has achieved a psychic as well as an economic victory which we did not anticipate and which we do not yet understand.

The intellectuals of the laboratory are perhaps even more conscious than the workers, of the success of mechanistic procedures in organizing the forces of nature for the use of man. It is true that there are scientists who tell us about the mystery of the atom and the death-blow that relativity has dealt to materialism, and there are those who sink back upon these assurances, relieved that the spiritual reputation of the universe has been saved. But these comforting suggestions mean little to the average intelligent person as long as he "gets ahead" in adjusting nature to his demands by invoking mechanistic methods.

The drift of popular logic becomes clear if we try to imagine what would have been our situation today if, in the latter part of the eighteenth century, not technology, but prayer, had furnished the key to the control of natural forces. Suppose a technique of prayer were responsible for forty-five thousand patents a year registered at Washington. Instead of being interested in laboratory experiments and quantitative measurements, the entire intellectual world would be centered now on prayer research. Count Keyserling would certainly not be telling us that we are on the eve of the most irreligious epoch of all time.

If we are on the threshold of such an epoch, with its inevitable loss of faith in a personal God, it is not difficult to mark the main trail by which we have come. That trail is indicated by the success of the mechanistic in contrast with the personalistic approach to the processes of nature.

This historic change in our approach to nature has raised the question of what functions remain to deity in the modern world. The question is serious because the vitality of spiritual beings is positively correlated with the value of the function which they perform. Take the belief in the devil, as a case in point. The decline and fall of the devil is the most striking event in contemporary religious thought. The devil was formerly responsible for all sorts of physical calamities, such as storms, earthquakes, and diseases. The Newtonian revolution in physics then revealed nature as the realm of impersonal laws. The devil was still needed, however, to account for the evil in human conduct. But evolution, with its disclosure of our animal origin, furnished an alternative explanation of man's paradoxical moral nature—thus taking away the devil's last job. The devil lingers on, in some quarters, but he is now a theological vagrant—a gentleman without visible means of support. And spiritual beings with nothing to do cease to exist.

The devil has gone because he has lost his function. Many of the traditional functions of God, particularly those associated with magical protection against natural calamities, have disappeared in the thinking of modern men. The functions of deity which were related to deliverance from a satanic realm in the next world have also in consequence of the new developments become suspect. What functions remain?

In addition to these primary causes—the success of the impersonal approach to nature and the consequent loss of traditional functions on the part of deity—there is an ethical reason for the decline of the belief in God. The growth of humanitarian feeling has made men increasingly sensitive to the difficulty of reconciling the pain and apparent injustice of life with the existence of an all-loving and all-powerful Creator. The issue is as old as Job and Lucretius, but the democratic movement and the enlargement of the historical imagination have deepened and broadened it. The present uncertainty concerning personal immortality makes the problem emotionally acute. The humanitarian looks out upon the dwarfed and stunted life of millions, gulps and swallows hard. He has no devil to blame anything on. He sees, nevertheless, that the roots of suffering and frustration run down into the cosmos. So deep is this sensitivity to the tragedy of life and to the difficulty of reconciling it with traditional views of God that some seek to rid themselves of the problem altogether by taking the straight plunge into atheism, cutting the knot of the cosmic riddle with the sword of defiant indifference to cosmic goals.

Sociological, intellectual, and ethical, the forces of the modern world which challenge the belief in God are formidable. Nor are they content merely with criticism. They are steadily producing a secular culture whose assumptions as to the nature and purpose of life are utterly different from those of the historic religion which has prevailed in Western civilization. According to these new assumptions the universe is simply a complex of energies to be manipulated for human purposes. Man, an animal in his origin and function, is here to adapt himself to and make the most of his terrestrial habitat. The ends of man's life are all realizable in the here and now and the chief of these ends is to glorify man and to enjoy the fruits of his labor—while it is day. The night cometh.

II

What lies on the other side of the shield? For it is evident from the poem quoted at the beginning of this chapter that there are men of intelligence and human sympathy, sensitive to the influences just described, who still find their belief in God sustained by the experience of life. Why do they believe in Him?

To answer that question with fullness would compel us to take the trail back over the centuries and trace the development of the various influences which have gone into the making of the Christian tradition. For in that tradition we have been brought up and through it the belief in God has been mediated to us. But we shall not attempt any such exhaustive procedure. What we hope to do in these pages is to put down as simply and as inductively as possible the reasons for their faith of which the liberal-minded Christians whom the author knows best are conscious when they say that they believe in God.

The persistence of this belief in spite of all the influences which have opposed it is one of the most extraordinary facts of human history. It is now a long time since Sophocles declared that "the things of the Gods fade away into dimness, and no man knoweth aught thereof clearly." But "the things of the Gods" have nevertheless survived migrations, vast changes in culture, the overthrow of empires, and the passing of civilizations, the contempt of the wise and the indifference of the thoughtless. A belief which deals with such "things" must have its roots in some very elemental experiences of human beings.

We have already indicated what those experiences were in their earliest forms in our discussion of the nature of religion: the sense of the "mystery" and of the "power" that broods within it; the crises of personal fortune and of community welfare; and the unquenchable desire for life which seeks in the presence of the "mystery" to override all barriers to its fulfillment.

These experiences are still basic in the religion of modern men. The "mystery" is more widely diffused over the whole of life today. It is not confined to those emergencies when commonplace and calculable methods become futile. There is mystery in beauty. To the eye and ear of the poet even

in the mud and scum of things,
There alway alway something sings.

There is mystery in truth, even the truth to which the atheist clings that all truth is an illusion. Though this "truth" slay him, yet will he trust it. Great is the mystery of truth. And greater still is the mystery of goodness, those frail ideals of character for which men give up life itself. There is mystery in the entire evolutionary drama, the story of how carbon compounds began to imprison solar radiation and to transmute heat waves into flowers, trees, and bird-song, and finally into symphonies, cathedrals, poems, and prayers. There is mystery in the humblest human career with its joys and sorrows, its nobility and its shame. The mystery is not less to the modern than it was to the savage. It is only the form of the mystery that has changed.[1]

Nor are the crises of our lives less significant for religious belief. The occasion of the crisis has changed. Many experiences which were crises to primitive men are no longer so to us. But into the careers of men today there come those moments when the break-up of routine, the convergence of events, the pressure of intolerable responsibilities, the thrill of deep joy and the pangs of high tragedy, leave the soul unusually sensitive to a wider reality which it is still quite likely to call God. Crises are certainly no less creative in religion than they are in scientific discovery and human achievement generally.

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[1] Lowie takes this position in *Primitive Religion*, p. 328.

You may say "such creative crises are rare." Yes, but their rarity makes them no less creative. The ideal pattern of our lives upon which we work through many dull and listless days is the creation of our rare moments. Such moments are also a constant source of inward strength. I have never dwelt in the mountains for any length of time. But there are memories of days in the Adirondacks and around Crawford Notch in New Hampshire, of a morning on Mont Afrique near Dijon, of a week in the Wengern Alps, which remain in my experience a perpetual fountain of renewal, and when the day's work has lost its perspective I go back in thought to some mountain crest that I have visited and look out upon my world from that point of vantage, and even as I gaze my life takes form again and my soul finds peace. So around the battlements of the Eternal City the clouds may "slowly wash again," but from some peak of experience in our rare moments we have seen the gleaming towers, and the memory of the vision lightens our load and illumines our way.[2]

Still the crisis is but an occasion and the "mystery" registers within the soul only because the latter has been made peculiarly sensitive by some native urge down in the depths of the human. The primal source of the belief in God seems to the writer to be constituted by this third element of the religious complex, the desire for life.

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[2] The figure is suggested in Francis Thompson's *The Hound of Heaven.*

The belief in God is not instinctive, but there is embodied in that belief something that comes very near to being instinctive—a faith that life is good, that it is worth living to the full. Children certainly have this faith. The dice of simple human nature are loaded with the assumption that man lives in an open world where his possibilities may be realized. It is this assumption that keeps man going. By it he has made civilization.

Taking its rise in the inmost recesses of man's nature, this faith in the goodness of life streams down through history, the inexhaustible source of human achievement. If you are looking for the roots of the belief in God you will find them drawing their sustenance from the stream of this naïve and primordial faith. Through the belief in God this faith rises like sap in the tree of growing human experience, flowing out into the branches of man's needs and aspirations to enable him to appropriate the light and warmth of his cosmic environment. For the belief in God is at bottom simply the persistent conviction that in satisfying the elemental craving of his nature to live life to the full, man has the backing of the universe. It is man's declaration of faith that his own hunger for life can and will be satisfied. This faith tells him to seek all truth, to dare all achievement, to cherish all beauty, to love with abandon and self-forgetfulness. The world which made him will not fail him.

Now this declaration of faith takes various forms, all of them marked by the naïveté of the impulse in which it originates.

The most generalized and comprehensive form of this faith is found in man's hunger for completion and in the various objects of devotion by which he tries to appease it. Man as a dynamic progressive creature is filled with a divine discontent. He goes with the multitude in search of material things, with the thought that they will satisfy him, but they do not. He hungers "after vanities and still ahungered goes." He discovers, as an intellectual of the type of Beulah Amidon, one of the editors of the *Survey*, that "just living, even when it is fairly complete, leaves one hungry." As a scholar his labors are never finished. In the desk of Auguste Sabatier, for instance, were found plans for research which would have required two hundred years for their accomplishment. The Alexanders of science do not moan that they have no more worlds to conquer. The lover of beauty is haunted by a face "all too fair to see"—the vision of the "beauty eternal" of which Diotima spoke to Socrates, "pure, clear, and unalloyed, not clogged with the pollutions of mortality." The saint craves perfection. "Not that I have already attained or am already made perfect, but I press on ——." The poet sings of the

> little hours of finite loveliness
> That end in useless tears and hungry grief.*

And all the while there persists the naïve faith that this hunger of man so multiform in its expression can be satisfied. A few months ago, in conversation with an eminent sociologist concerning religion, the writer took occasion to ask this student of human affairs concerning his own faith. His response was most suggestive. "My faith," he said, "is this. I believe that the universe is going to satisfy the deepest needs and the highest aspirations of man." The language here is the language of one of the most richly cultured and philosophic minds of our day, but the cry which it voices is the cry of the ages for more life and the utterly naïve trust that the universe which created man with a hunger for bread will not put him off with a stone.

Now it is the experience of the ages that only in what men have called a divine life, above and beyond these human lives of ours, can that ultimate hunger of the soul for completion, of whose various forms we have been speaking, find satisfaction. Perhaps a mental picture will make that clear.

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* From John Richard Moreland's poem "Beauty," published in *The Christian Century,* August 14, 1929.

Suppose we imagine the whole of the human race, past, present, and future, down to the last man seated in a cosmic amphitheater. There they are—the sum total of humanity. The members of that innumerable audience have come together to worship. And what do they do? They sing about themselves. They salute their own great ones. Their prayers are memorials of their own deeds. "We have suffered, we have wrought, we have dreamed, and at last created the Kingdom of Man," is the anthem sung by millions of voices.

Let us ask now whether in that vast presence man's hunger for completion has been satisfied, that richness of desire which lifted him above the brute and kept him in ceaseless toil and travail of creation throughout the ages. Has the size and number of the throng, its joy and comfortable status, stilled at last that immemorial longing?

Suppose as a test of man's emancipation we proceed to erect in the midst of that uncounted multitude an altar—an altar so majestic and central that every eye can see it, and suppose you write nothing upon the base of that altar but the ancient inscription, "To the Unknown God." Is there any doubt about the reaction of that throng? Will it not turn, wearied quickly by its self-praise, to bow before that altar with an intensity of spirit that can only mean that the soul has found again its natural vocation?

Is not the picture even of a humanistic heaven incomplete without an altar? Was not the Bishop of Cremona right when he wrote to the Edinburgh Missionary Conference, "Man is oppressed by the Infinite," and this is a "consciousness from which he is unable to deliver himself." And if you do not care for the Bishop because he might be prejudiced, has not Bertrand Russell said essentially the same thing in the following statement: "Life devoted only to life is animal without any real human value, incapable of preserving men permanently from weariness and the feeling that all is vanity. If life is to be fully human, it must serve some end which seems in some sense outside human life, some end which is impersonal and above mankind, such as God or truth or beauty. Those who best promote life do not have life for their purpose. They aim rather at what seems like a gradual incarnation, a bringing into our human existence of something eternal . . . remote from . . . the devouring jaws of time. Contact with this eternal world—even if it be only a world of our imagining—brings a strength and fundamental peace which cannot be wholly destroyed by the struggles and apparent failures of our temporal life."[3]

We shall leave man where Mr. Russell leaves him, gazing up into an eternal world where alone he can find the completion of his nature, and we shall leave to Mr. Russell the task of convincing him that he is simply the victim of self-hallucination. Hallucination or not, the belief in a world of eternal values of which God is the Guarantee and Support is the only belief which man has found in history which satisfies his cry for completion with an answer which enters the soul as both an infinite allurement and a peace that passeth understanding.

III

Now of all the various phases of this desire for completion, which we have found the most comprehensive form of the life impulse which drives man to belief in God, there is one which is particularly significant, significant in the history of this belief and significant in the experience of men today. It is the desire of man for a world which at bottom is reasonable and just. Men feel that their intellectual and moral natures are "hung up in the air" if they are conceived as functioning apart from a world which

[3] Russell, *Why Men Fight,* pp. 268, 269.

as a whole has no correspondence with them. So the scientist is loath to believe that in working on the grammar of nature he is spending his time trying to interpret a process which is meaningless; and the philosopher will assert with a grim determination which betrays its naïve origin that the values of human experience originate in a world that knows what it is doing.

Listen to Leonard Hobhouse, for instance, confessing his faith. After referring to certain noble individuals whom he has known, he says:

> But of this we may be sure. No man or woman such as I have ventured to speak of, nor yet any such quality as theirs, though less developed and marred with imperfections, ever came out of the clay, unless the clay itself has mind. No rational observer (if we may revert to that fancy) from another universe would admit such a hypothesis. With the utmost allowance for what development could do he would demand some continuity, and if he was assured that their origin was from matter he could only infer that matter was alive and instinct with some very wonderful imaginations. As the geologist is sure that the isolated boulder does not spring out of the alluvial on which it rests but is a detached fragment of the mother rock, so with even stronger logic would he refer the radiant soul to its matrix of spiritual being. Every detailed hypothesis of origin that we may construct may be faulty. The immanent spirit may be no nearer the truth than the transcendent Creator. The idea of development

may pass away like that of special creation. One truth will stand firm. The world which has engendered such beings as we have known is no mean world. It is a world worth living and fighting for, the world which they have trodden. It is the dwelling of a spiritual power, be that what it may, which will some day come to its own, be that how it may.[4]

Here is a summary of ages of argument concerning the existence of God. What does it come down to? It comes down to the assumption that the good life must come out of an essentially good world. It starts with a naïve admiration for worthy human beings and it moves on by a rather primitive logic to the conclusion that characters instinct with truth, beauty, and love could not have originated in a universe which was at heart indifferent to truth, unappreciative of beauty, and invincibly loveless. The man of thought can find no completion of soul in a world which seems to him at bottom irrational.

The average person may not ponder the constitution of the universe and weigh its rationality in the scales of logic, but he is interested in the behavior of the world towards himself and he craves a world which in the long last will be found dealing with men on the square. He really has to believe in such a world to carry on with enthusiasm and self-sacrifice. Note the presence of this wistful belief in an extract from a recently published letter sent by a young soldier to his mother during the late war—an extract which illustrates the raw material of experience out of which the belief in God arises. The letter was written by a Jewish lad, David Hochstein of Rochester, N. Y., just before his death in action. It reads as follows:

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[4] Hobhouse in Muirhead, *Contemporary British Philosophy,* First Series, p. 188.

> When you have seen and met men who have been through the inferno many times, every belief you ever held is either destroyed or tempered more strongly and I have had many to destroy—in whose place I find newer, better, and stronger ones. Everyone finds his belief, his religion here. I have found mine. I adhere to no creed, no more than my father did, nor to any particular kind of God, but, dear mother, I believe I have faith. I know that for all these heroic souls gone to the beyond there is some future. The world could not be so materialistic to have it otherwise. There is much that is materialistic about the war—too much. But those who die, be it recklessly or by the most unexpected exploding shell, have a compensation more than a mere title of hero or a posthumous service cross. You don't try to explain it, you know it, in France.[5]

Professor Whitehead has suggested that there seems to be a "large consensus" among the thinkers of all the great religions in favor of the concept of a

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[5] *War Service Record of Rochester and Monroe County,* vol. i, p. 201.

"rightness in things." In the Hochstein letter you have an index to a vast volume of first-hand personal experience upon which the consensus of the thinkers is based. This experience, as is evident in the letter before us, is not a matter of logic according to the categories of Aristotle or John Stuart Mill. It is a matter of primitive faith, made more vivid by the circumstances of battle—the faith that the universe is not going to fail men at their best. It is the faith that you discover in the conviction of Socrates that no evil can befall the good man, alive or dead.

This craving for a world in which there is an implicit moral order is about as elementary a thing as there is in human life. The philosopher wants a world that is reasonable. The average man, a world that is right. The vitality of this craving comes out in Arnold Zweig's novel, *The Case of Sergeant Grischa.* Grischa is a Russian prisoner about to be shot on a false accusation by his German captors. Grischa knows that the accusation is false and his whole soul revolts at the horror of his unjust death. "He didn't so much mind being shot, but what he did mind was being shot in this senseless stupid way, having done nothing to deserve it." Then Täwje, his friend, the Jewish carpenter, falls to talking with him and Täwje expounds to the Russian the Biblical doctrine that "whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed." Grischa snatches at that thought like a spiritually drowning man clutching at a straw. It is a crude enough logic, it is true. Grischa has killed others. He himself must be killed. So the Bible says. It does not say how or why. The naïve Russian can see a certain rough justice in it. Blood for blood. "Grischa's whole face lit up with surprise as he grasped with infinite satisfaction the conclusion of this brief meditation. He was glad to find that the matter was in order; his anguish passed away. The case of Grischa Paprotkin no longer seemed to him a thing foul and unnatural; it was quite in order. All that mattered was that something should be in order."

"All that mattered was that something should be in order." The *Little Review* published in the closing issue of its existence the replies to a questionnaire which it had sent out to a number of intellectuals. Among the questions asked was the query as to what kind of a world the intellectuals thought they were living in. Most of the answers indicated that the respondents were trying to be reasonable beings in an utterly unreasonable world. Now intellectuals may be able to afford the luxury of such a piquant existence, but average men and women cannot. Neither, for the most part, can those who carry the burden of the world's suffering and the responsibility for the world's achievement. For them it matters tremendously that "something should be in order." And their craving for a "rightness in things" is one of the most ineradicable of the sources of the belief in God.

It is also one of the most satisfying and assuring. Of all the ways of approaching the divine there is none which brings a more convincing sense of response on the part of the "power" which dwells within all our values than comes to the individual who takes a risk for or who serves at a cost the Best that he knows. Under such circumstances this sense of a rightness in things may become focused sharply in the consciousness of a Supporting Power. The writer recalls one experience of this kind which constitutes for him a permanent datum of religion. It was upon an occasion when an important decision hung in the balance. Whichever way the decision went, it appeared that some good would be sacrificed. Finally, he saw a solution which included all the good on both sides, but which involved considerable personal risk. Nevertheless, this solution was chosen. With the choice came a discovery which one describes in figures of speech rather than in analytical terms. The experience was like that of a man sinking in a bog and coming unexpectedly upon firm ground. It was like digging fruitlessly through sand for a foundation and coming suddenly upon solid rock. Out of the experience emerged this bit of wisdom, that when a man rests his all on the Best that he knows he discovers that the ideal thing which seemed so fragile when he stepped out upon it has foundations which make it the most utterly real Supporting Power he has found in life.

Here lies one of the ultimate reasons for the persistence of the belief in God in men of a modern temper. When the fountains of the great deep have been broken up and man has found himself alone on the angry sea of the universe, when with apparently the last gesture of his spirit he has committed himself to that vision of the Best which glimmers before his eyes, he finds to his amazement that about him are the arms of a strong swimmer and that he is not sinking. He learns then how strangely true to human experience are the words addressed to God which Whitman puts on the lips of Columbus, "Thee, Thee at least, I know." Here is something more elemental than logic which logic may refine but cannot create.

IV

One question we have not yet really faced, although we took a side glance at it in our discussion of the organic view of the world. We must answer the question, Is the Supporting Power which man meets in the experience of the religious life to be thought of as a Person?

The conception of God as a Person seems an inference rather than one of the more intuitive outreaches of the human spirit such as man's desire for completion. Man infers that the Power which completes his life is personal. But the inference is not universal. There are religious thinkers and devotees of various religious sects which think of the Power as an Order rather than a Person. In the Christian religion you have the conception, as in the poem with which we began this chapter, of both a Person and an Order—God and His Kingdom. The apostle Paul, moreover, evidently thought of God both as a Person over against humanity and as a Spiritual Substance in which man could share.[6]

And there are difficulties in connection with the use of the concept personality which have to be met. We have already suggested in a previous chapter that personality as we know it is the effect of specific conditions in nature and human society and that any quality which we transfer to God out of a human context becomes a poor basis for syllogistic reasoning.

The fact seems to be, as General Smuts has pointed out, that every idea or concept has its field—the realm of application where it is luminous and suggestive and where it leads thought on to make new and fertile connections. When, on the other hand, you carry the concept outside its natural field, it becomes an obstacle to understanding.

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[6] McGiffert, *The God of the Early Christians,* p. 33.

So it seems with the conception of a personal God. When that conception remains in the field of the communion of the worshiper with deity, it seems to the writer to be infinitely the most vital of all the ideas which can be used to express the response of the divine to human need. But when we use it to describe all of God's relationships—to nature, for instance—we pass out of the realm where the conception has proved most beneficial. Man has gotten ahead in many of his dealings with nature as he has dealt with it in impersonal rather than in personal terms. An attitude of agnosticism as to the specific ways in which God functions through nature is preferable, at least at present, as compared with the effort to determine where God's responsibility ends and man's begins. If the position of this book is sound that the belief in God, looked at from the human side, is a function of man's struggle for the fulfillment of life, then our method must be to find the area in our experience where belief in a personal God is vital and productive, and the area where the emphasis should be upon the divine order which man may explore and in which he may participate.[7] If the physicist is compelled to use both the classical theory and the quantum theory in dealing with atoms, why should it be thought strange that the government of the universe should refuse to come inside a single set of ideas?

Having said so much in qualification of the use of the personal conception in reference to God, may we express our conviction of the permanent necessity and vitality of that conception? Those who ascribe the continuance of the belief in a personal God to the rationalization of religious experience in terms of primitive animism miss the mark. They ignore the fact which Lloyd Morgan points out, that if man is to think of God at all as a concrete whole, he can hardly neglect as a basis for his thinking the one such whole that he knows at first hand, namely himself.

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[7] There is no necessary contradiction between the personal approach to God and the approach through an order of nature and human life, which as seen from the point of view of its highest possibilities we call divine.

The conductor of an orchestra, training the musicians who are engaged in playing his own composition, reaches the members of his orchestra both through his personal leadership and through the production which he has created. And in the experience of the members, technical study of the production is no substitute for responsiveness to the bâton of the conductor, nor can such responsiveness atone for failure to master the technical conditions of the highest artistic achievement.

Must not God's relationship to the universe be far more many-sided than the relationship of a conductor-composer to his orchestra?

More important still. They ignore the situation in which man comes upon God. The experiences of a man's life in which he becomes most sure of the divine are those experiences when he is most conscious of being himself a person—a person over against blind nature and an unresponsive society—and when, nevertheless, he comes upon a "power" outside himself which coöperates with him and shares his struggle in the most intimate fashion. Could any inference be more natural than that the "power" which shares these most utterly personal experiences must be in some important respects personal?

As far as the persistence of the belief is concerned, it would be guaranteed by its survival value for the experience of worship alone. The heart of that experience is the act of self-dedication. Now man cannot give himself completely to that which is less than himself. All his dedicatory acts in family, profession, and nation ultimately involve persons. In worship man strives to give himself to God. It follows that his worship will be most successful in economizing and releasing energy, in organizing all the emotional impulses of his nature into a significant act of will if the object of his worship has personal quality. Perhaps this is the reason for the fact which Marett has

Assumed

already pointed out, that the religions which stress the personal approach to deity are the most successful. They are the most successful because the belief in a personal God secures the maximum release of power in the life of the worshiper. And nature selects the power-giving elements of religion for survival.

We have concluded our interpretation of the reasons why men with the modern outlook continue today to believe in God. The most significant fact about this belief, as it appears to us, is the fact that when you examine it you come upon something which thrusts its roots down into human nature below the levels of intellection and draws its strength from the primitive forces which insure man's survival and progress. If man should cease to care whether there were any possible fulfillment of his life or whether there were a "rightness in things," if the Best should cease to lure him as something precious and holy, if tragedy should disclose no Supporting Power by which he might triumph over despair, if an aberrant cynicism should destroy the faith of his childhood that life is worth living to the full—then his belief in God would perish. But there would probably perish with it that "strenuous mood" which has made possible human achievement. An age-long experience lies behind the contention of William James, that men have to postulate the existence of God if only "as a pretext for living hard."

It is conceivable, of course, that all these forces which have impelled man on the pathway of this belief represent an unconscious conspiracy of deception. To James Branch Cabell man's sense of coöperating with an Eternal World instinct with value is "romance," and to Bertrand Russell it is a matter of "our imagining." But both writers seem to agree that this romantic or imaginative faith is essential to human fulfillment. Even Professor Leuba wants a universe which is "rational" where man may feel at "one with the Whole." But how can a universe be rational where a belief permanently essential to human achievement is illusory? Can the plain man be blamed for trusting the deeper forces of his nature until the partisans of negation who come to us in the name of reason succeed in making their own logic more coherent?

It is the vitality of the belief in God which presents the most serious obstacle to the complete secularization of the modern world.

> Just when we are safest, there's a sunset touch
> A fancy from a flower bell, some one's death. . . .
> And that's enough

to fill the soul once more with a haunting sense of its own dignity and to flood the silent spaces between the stars with a melody of cosmic love.

V

And now what do the negative tendencies which we have described earlier portend as to the future of this belief?

One thing seems clear. There will be changes in our conception of the function of God. We shall probably think of God more and more as the end of life rather than means, as means only as He is primarily end. We shall think less of a God whom we can use and more of a God who uses us. We shall strive less to interpret specific occurrences in nature and history as peculiar interventions of deity, and more to bring all the events of life into the perspective of a divine ideal. Our acts of religious devotion will be gradually cleansed of the motive of manipulating the divine and charged with the higher motive of opening our lives to the illuminating and empowering energy of God.

Since we shall think of the divine as an Order as well as a Person, it is possible for science and a devout intelligence to work out a discipline of religious living by which men will be able to preserve their souls in the midst of our hectic civilization. As science and intelligence take the place of magic in our religion, the deeper forces of our nature which give rise to the belief in God will make new alliances among our instinctive impulses. They will consort no longer with fears and bigotries, but with the ardor of thought, the aspiration for beauty, and the love of humankind to explore the possibilities of the spiritual world. Much that has been called religious, but which has become hardened and incrusted, will drop away and the mood of naïve and trustful wonder which holds the secret of faith will return.

As far as the personality of God is concerned, that issue will be fought out in our factories as well as in the philosopher's chair. If personality on the human plane is subordinate to mechanism, then personality will play a subordinate rôle on the cosmic plane. Whatsoever a man sows on earth he reaps in the skies.

In this connection the estrangement of the working classes from the Church may have a deeper meaning than we have suspected. It may mean that the god whose chief interest has seemed to be the maintenance of the ecclesiastical and social *status quo* must die in order that the God who is "the substance of all revolutions" may be born. The ways of the Eternal are past finding out. If the Assyrian with his atrocities could get rid of the tribal deities of western Asia, it is possible that the Communist with his Cheka may get rid of deities who are content to offer compensatory rewards in another world in lieu of earthly justice.

There can be little question that the changes which seem imminent in our conception of the functions of God will be disturbing. But they are not lacking in promise. Under their influence we shall think of God as the atmosphere and the assumption of the highest life. He furnishes its setting. He is to be found in the realm of appreciation rather than of manipulation. Because he is an Order he is the vision of unrealized achievement in every realm and because He is a Person He is yet our unfailing resource in defeat. He meets every man on the level of his own need and yet He draws us all into the corporate spiritual union of all mankind. The experience of God will probably always come to us as a medicine, a remedy for emergencies, but it will seem more and more like the glow of health and joy and the unforgettable vision which one brings back from a walk over the hills. God is the end of life, an end which is beyond life but which alone brings us to the fullest realization of ourselves in life. Because He is the lure and the imperative in the Best that we know He is indeed "the substance of all revolutions." In the service of such a God religion in the coming age as in the first age of Christianity will pivot once more upon the future rather than upon the past. "Thy Kingdom come."

The humanitarian challenge to the belief in God is difficult to meet. The problem of reconciling the goodness and the power of God in the face of the frustrations and sufferings, the cruelties and stupidities of life has never been logically solved. The only people who have been able to deal effectively with this problem are those who have lived rather than argued their way into it.

Out of their experience, however, have come some clues to the attitudes which carry men furthest on the road toward an inner understanding of the ancient dilemma. There is, for instance, the folk tale of the king's son who fell in love with a maiden in a menial position. Only after he has made his irrevocable decision and has chosen her at a cost to himself does he discover that she is a princess in disguise. The meaning of myths and folk tales can never be stated in abstractions, but have we not here a bit of the ancient wisdom of the race which has learned that the "best" must be sought and loved for its own sake without thought of ulterior advantage if it is to reveal its intrinsic virtue and grace. Is this not the same wisdom that you find at the close of the ninth book of the Republic, where Plato says that the man who has the pattern of the heavenly city in his soul will order his life thereby, regardless of whether such a city be ever actualized on earth. Have we not come also upon the great reality mirrored forever in the story of the Cross? Only those who lose their lives to a goodness which seems powerless find them again in a power that is supreme.

What would happen if the Church should follow this clue and answer the humanitarians by a deed—the choice of the goodness rather than the power of God as the object of its life? The Church would probably become smaller. But it would be more humane and it would find itself strangely invested again with spiritual authority. Once again it could stand over against the age and rebuke it. It would act upon our secular culture as a catalytic, energizing the nobler tendencies of its environment, instead of slowly disintegrating itself, from secular influences. It would furnish a rallying-place for those who had chosen the Best as their everlasting portion. And it would not travel on its way alone. For when man chooses the Best against all the world, as in the story of Pygmalion and Galatea, the Best leaves the pedestal of adoring thought and becomes the Living Companion of man on his spiritual pilgrimage.

The choice of the goodness of God discloses a great paradox. The "Best" which seemed in the beginning so powerless wins its way to a power over men that nothing else possesses. And the saints have always reasoned from their experience that the goodness which had developed such irresistible authority in their own souls could not ultimately be withstood anywhere in the universe.

VI

Does the belief in God, attended as it is by perplexing difficulties, really make a difference in the lives of men today?

It is the evidence of those who are compelled to live without this belief that it does. The most recent and moving evidence of this kind is found in Mr. Walter Lippmann's *A Preface to Morals*, a book which for beauty of style and worth of substance is an outstanding achievement of the humanistic spirit. What does Mr. Lippmann suggest as the attitude toward life appropriate to the modern intelligence? It is the attitude of a neostoicism. In pages of dignified prose which remind one of Marcus Aurelius Mr. Lippmann tells us that "The mature man would take the world as it comes and within himself remain quite unperturbed. . . . He would face pain with fortitude, for he would have put it away from the inner chambers of his soul. . . . Since nothing gnawed at his vitals, neither doubt nor ambition nor frustration nor fear, he would move easily through life. And so whether he saw the thing as comedy, as high tragedy, or plain farce, he would affirm that it is what it is and that the wise man can enjoy it."[8]

Here is an attitude which may indeed involve, as Mr. Lippmann suggests, "the only possible hygiene of the soul for men whose selves have become disjointed by the loss of their central certainties." But where the soul has a central certainty, there another attitude becomes possible, an attitude which differs as much from the disinterestedness of Mr. Lippmann as the passionate faith of the Apostle Paul differed from the calm detachment of a Gamaliel. Compare with Mr. Lippmann's stoic urbanity the ardent devotion of a man with a central certainty like Toyohiko Kagawa, the Japanese reformer, novelist and Christian apostle, who has spent much of his life voluntarily in the slums of Kobe, the servant and champion of the poor:

"Who shall separate me from the love which is complete atonement, complete salvation? Shall affliction? or hardship? or persecution? or hunger? or nakedness? or danger? or the sword? I know that the Love and the Good which seek in me an outlet will give me the victory over all these. Therefore, though I suffer every hardship, I cannot deny the God who as Love works within me.

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[8] Lippmann, *A Preface to Morals*, pp. 329, 330.

"Under the spell of this love, hardships, disasters, illnesses, even death are all transmuted into arts.

"God is the Power of Life revealed in Love—the Effort of Cosmic Will which would lift all and save all. . . . God is perennially the Indwelling One, Eternal Love. . . . When the inner Power is dynamic it becomes eruptive, revolutionary. The revolution of Love is the most potent of all revolutions. All revolutions heretofore, compared to the revolution of the Inner Power, are but as trivial games.

"O revolution of Love make ready within. For the courage of Love must vanquish all that is vicious. Prepare ye the way for Love, for our God goes out to battle."[9]

Here is a faith which joins the hearts of believers across the centuries. It is a faith which asks much of the universe, which dreams greatly, and which risks everything upon the realization of its dream. It is a faith which knows depths which the stoic spirit can never sound, even the depths from which issued the cry, "My God, my God, why has thou forsaken me?" It is a faith which scales heights which the stoic spirit can never reach, even those heights from which the seer of Patmos saw that "the kingdoms of this world are become the Kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ." To such a faith life cannot be visioned as "plain farce" and be enjoyed. Nor can it move easily through life, keeping a central area "unperturbed." It finds life tense and difficult, for vast issues are at stake upon which it has placed its all. Nor can it keep its soul. It has lost its soul in love to find it forever in the keeping of an "other."

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[9] Kagawa, *Love, the Law of Life,* pp. 308, 309, 312, 313.

Stoic and Christian, they confront one another today even as two millennia ago. If you ask what the belief in God may mean you may find an answer possibly in such a comparison of ultimate attitudes toward life as we have just made. Belief in God to a character like Kagawa means a life of abandon, of enthusiasm, of self-sacrifice, of complete self-fulfillment. The goals of such a life are no mere frail projections of human desire upon an indifferent cosmos. They are the realities of an eternal world become incandescent in the medium of our special environment and earthly needs. Because the Eternal is inexhaustible the desire for life which it creates is inexhaustible. It "overflows upon the other side of death" into immortality.

It is because the belief in God unites richness of desire, simplicity of aim, complete coöperation with the environment, inward peace, and undiscourageable hope with the power to endure to the uttermost, that Hartley Burr Alexander is probably right in his conviction that those who have such a belief will outlive those who have it not.[10]

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[10] Alexander, H. B., *Nature and Human Nature,* p. 45.

Thus Christianity took its place in history as a religion of revelation, of the rule of God and of redemption: in each of these respects Jesus was the central figure, and the religion hinged upon the moral nature of mankind. It appeared also as the religion of the individual soul and of the whole world, as the religion of fulfillment, satisfying the longings of the best minds and giving them peace with God, and at the same time always as the religion of hope, supplying them with the highest aims, making it their duty to pursue them, putting their finest powers to the strain; . . . it brought God into close relations with his world, and, following man's course from creation, through redemption, to completion, gave a new meaning to his life. . . . It did much more: it established definite moral relations between God and man, regarding God as the Father and man as His child—and no loftier relationship could be imagined. Truly a message of glad tidings was this gospel of the sovereign mercy of God.

—VON SCHUBERT, *Outlines of Church History*, pp. 28-29.

Chapter Six

THE CHRIST OF YESTERDAY AND TOMORROW

I

The question, "What shall I do with Jesus which is called Christ?" was casual and legal when it was first asked in the court of Pilate the Roman procurator of Judea centuries ago. Few of those who heard it could have imagined that it had any permanent significance for human life. Certainly no one thought that almost two millennia from that date a vast number of human beings would still be asking the question which Pilate put to the multitude, and that their minds would still be haunted by perplexity concerning the appropriate answer. But regardless of the perplexities, no Christian may undertake today to state his faith without attempting to answer for himself Pilate's question—a question which means for us an inquiry into the religious significance of Jesus.[1]

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[1] In the following discussion I have not been governed by the distinctions which scholars make between the Jesus of history and the Christ of theology. Christ is used interchangeably with Jesus.

The difficulty in answering Pilate's question today lies primarily in the fact to which Harnack has called attention, that in estimating the significance of a man you have to take account not merely of his life as it appeared to the hasty and superficial gaze of his contemporaries, but also of the lengthened shadow of his influence upon the world. And where will you find a life whose historical repercussions have been so eventful as those which have followed the career of Jesus. "Jesus Christ is the most powerful spiritual force that ever operated for good on and in humanity. He is today what he has been for centuries—an object of reverence and love to the good, the cause of remorse and change, penitence and hope to the bad; of moral strength to the morally weak, of inspiration to the despondent, consolation to the desolate, and cheer to the dying. He has created the typical virtues and moral ambitions of civilized man; . . . and has become the living ideal that has steadied and raised, awed and guided youth, braced and ennobled manhood, mellowed and beautified age. In Him the Christian ages have seen the manifested God, the Eternal living in time, the Infinite within the limits of humanity." [2]

These words of Principal Fairbairn are just as true today as they were a generation ago when they were written. We could add to them if it were necessary. No wonder Professor Whitehead says speaking of the career of Jesus: "It has the decisiveness of a supreme ideal and that is why the history of the world divides at this point of time."[3] If we are to follow Harnack's counsel and consider the lengthened shadow of a man's influence in estimating his significance then indeed in this instance we may understand why the answer to Pilate's question is now considerably more baffling than when the question was originally asked.

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[2] Fairbairn, *Studies in the Life of Christ*, p. 2.

But we have no alternative, for there is no way by which one may come closer to the inner meaning of the Christian faith, to its ultimate energies and sources of power than by attempting to answer Pilate's question even if the answer be pitifully inadequate. For Christ is the distinguishing fact of the religion which bears his name and Dr. Glover is right when he tells us that it is the men who have believed in his eventual supremacy in human life who have gained for him the influence which he has already won. And Principal Fairbairn is right when he points out that the various revolutions and reformations of Christianity have always involved some attempt to return to its founder. The fate of Christianity as a religion is largely bound up with the world's verdict

[3] Whitehead, *Religion in the Making,* p. 57.

on the fundamental assumptions of Jesus and on his qualities of character.

II

But how shall we approach this question of the significance of Jesus Christ for religious faith today? One way would be that of the creeds. There are many Christians who are satisfied with what the creeds tell them about Christ. There are others who are not satisfied and we are of that number. We are not satisfied because the creeds, while enshrining vital experiences, are also full of outgrown metaphysics, the rationalizations of experience in terms of the philosophy of bygone ages. They also represent battlecries, shibboleths which were used by various parties in the Church to crush other parties. The creeds, accordingly, are devisive and to start with the creeds is to arouse old antagonisms and to fail to get the testimony of those who would testify if they were not placed upon the defensive.

A much more popular way today of getting at the religious significance of Jesus Christ is the way of the historical scholar. The historian would reconstruct in imagination, as far as that is possible, the actual conditions amid which Jesus lived and worked.

He would recapture every word Jesus spoke and behold again every deed Jesus wrought.

And our debt to modern historical scholarship is already great. For ages the Church saw the person and work of Jesus Christ through a fog of ideas generated by Jewish Messianism, Hellenistic metaphysics, and early Christian controversies. As we get back now to the earliest records the fog begins to lift and we come upon one who had a simpler way of looking at life than we had been wont to believe. We have already pointed out, moreover, that Christianity is loath to part with history and become a mere philosophy. Christianity has a stake in history. It wants to know that the ideals which it cherishes are more than dreams, that they are capable of realization.

But at bottom the average religious man has the feeling that he can no more be saved by historians than he can by philosophers or popes. He cannot be an exact historical scholar himself, and whenever he listens to the scholars he finds that they differ among themselves. In the pages of Harnack he discovers a Jesus who was a teacher of modern liberal religion. According to Schweitzer, on the other hand, Jesus was deeply affected by the thought of the approaching catastrophic end of the age. If the inquirer reads Maurenbrecher and Kautsky the gospels will reveal to him a champion of proletarian salvation by a revolution that was ultimately economic. Jewish scholars tend to reject or depreciate those elements in the record that are non-Jewish, and Roman Catholic scholars find there the beginnings of the papal system. The scholars are not without philosophic and party bias, and they often pour the fluid events of history into a mold that has been fashioned in their own minds.

Suppose, however, that the historian had attained his ideal. Suppose the scholars all agree and the historical records stand at last unimpeachable in their accuracy. The portrait of Jesus is drawn just as he appeared among men. What have you? You have simply the Jesus whom his own generation rejected. You have still to consider that lengthened shadow of which we have spoken and the question why at the feet of this man

> The souls of now two thousand years
> Have laid up here their toils and fears
> And all the earnings of their pain. . . .

The gospel, moreover, would still "remain to be done." And until you had to some degree shared the gospel in life and activity you would not really understand its meaning and its power.

The last word about Jesus, if there is any last word—the last word even though it is not a clear word—will be spoken by the experience of the ages, by the experience which the race has had, has today, and will have tomorrow, of a man, of a movement, and of an interpretation of life which has centered in him.

III

As we think of Jesus Christ in the light of the long past it appears that there are two facts about him which cannot be ignored, blurred, or explained away.

In the first place, there is the fact that he has represented in the minds of multitudes of individuals a supreme quality of specifically human life. In accordance with this conviction his words have been applied to numberless concrete human situations, and his characteristics have been held up before men for their imitation and embodiment.

Now all of this vast imitative effort has validity only on one assumption, that he was himself unreservedly a human being. As a demigod he is not an object of imitation. And if he walked among us on spiritual stilts, exhorting us to come up higher, there is an unreality in his message which is ultimately unescapable.

It seems to the writer that this assumption of the unreserved concrete humanity of Jesus is one that we ought to make, and that as far as the interpretation of Christ to our generation is concerned it is tragic to start anywhere else. Here is where the people started who knew and loved him first. He was the child of his people and his time. He had no advantages which are not available to us. His nature was tempted and tried in all points just as ours. He worked under our limitations of body and mind. His personality, like ours, was the creative result of a thousand influences of heredity and environment, of endowment and experience. He drew out of his environment and used as the vehicle of his message elements which were of transient value as well as those which are of permanent significance, just as we do.

The tremendous power of attraction, moreover, which his personality developed we have to begin to understand on this same one-hundred-per-cent human level. The devotion which he inspired had its roots primarily in biology rather than in theology. When Sheridan, for instance, rode upon the field of Winchester, why did his men gather about him and cling to him? Because his was the one apparently victorious personality that they knew in their hour of defeat. Why did bankers cling to J. P. Morgan in the dark days of November, 1907? Because he seemed the one solvent personality in an insolvent financial world. Why did men and women cling to Jesus of Nazareth? The answer, in its beginnings at least, is not obscure. It is because he seemed to them then, and seems to them now, the one supremely victorious and solvent personality in a world that is perpetually hovering on the brink of moral defeat and spiritual insolvency.

Is it so strange, after all, that there developed a gospel about Jesus? When you consider the vastness of the issues involved in the moral and spiritual life of men, and the power which they developed in contact with Jesus to meet and solve those issues, can you wonder that he came to be the very focus of their interpretation of their world? The devotion which Jesus inspired may or may not be theologically explicable, but it was biologically inevitable.

The acceptance of the unreserved humanity of Jesus seems important because, with present knowledge of how personality is rooted in the entire human situation, it is doubtful if men will take the spiritual quality of Jesus' life seriously on any other basis. We would admit freely that there have been those in every generation who, under every theological form, have taken seriously the summons to a Christ-like life. But most Christians seem to feel that the injunction to be like Christ is a counsel of perfection for some other world than this. Even when they do take his teachings and example seriously, they are likely to do so in a wooden fashion, as in his sayings concerning marriage and divorce and in his choice of a celibate career. The follies which have been justified by an appeal to some rigidly interpreted word of Jesus it would be futile to enumerate. Not until we accept whole-heartedly the humanity of Jesus will we arrive at the point where his profound insights into the meaning of life will be communicable in forms at once both dynamic and flexible.

But do we, after all, know what kind of a person Jesus was, or even that such a person as Jesus ever lived? The writer may be hopelessly misinformed, but he does not believe that there need be as much doubt concerning the answers to these questions as at times there has seemed to be. The effort to reduce Jesus to the status of a mere legendary or mythological figure, associated with such names as those of W. B. Smith and Arthur Drews, seems to have come and gone. It has few supporters in the world of scholarship.[4]

On the matter of the character of Jesus as distinguished from his offices, titles, or extraordinary deeds, we believe the words of Renan are in point. "We have proof," he says, "that apart from the miraculous circumstances the actual character of Francis of Assisi corresponds with exactness to the portrait of him which has been handed down. Francis of Assisi has always been one of the strongest reasons for believing that Jesus was almost precisely such a person as the synoptic gospels depict."[5]

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[4] The best statement of the evidence on "the historicity of Jesus" with which the writer is familiar is found in the book with that title by Professor Shirley Jackson Case.

The background of Renan's statement consists of the fact that the attempts to render the character of Jesus unhistorical have been based on the supernatural elements in his career, which may be traced for their origin to the religious fancy. But Renan suggests that the solid core of that character has been reproducible, so that criticism of its actuality on the ground of the supernatural elements in the record falls to the ground.

What kind of a person, then, was Jesus? He was evidently a person with a strange intimacy with God. He counted on God, assumed God, and enjoyed God as other men did not. Klausner speaks of his "exaggerated sense of nearness to God."[6] He felt himself at war with the evil forces of the world, human and demonic, and he felt called to prepare men for the new time which God would usher in and which he felt was near. With all the tension which existed between himself and his environment he was possessed of an inner integrity which combined complete self-respect and a lofty consciousness of the value of his mission with a spirit which cared little for titles or prestige of a worldly type. In all that he said and did, and with all his sternness toward evil, there was a passion of love for human beings of all classes and conditions which overflowed in works of healing and the most naïve friendliness. And the life of fellowship with God and of love for men which he lived, he lived with such naturalness that he could communicate it to others in words and stories of unequaled vividness and simplicity. No wonder that a modern Jewish scholar says: "In him is combined what is best and most mysterious and most enchanting in Israel—the eternal people whose child he was."[7]

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[5] Quoted by Coulton in *Christ, St. Francis and Today*, p. 57.

[6] Klausner, *Jesus of Nazareth*, p. 378.

Did such a person ever live, you say? Well, at any rate, do not tell us that such a character can, in the nature of things, be only fictive. I, myself, have known one such person, a man whose expectancy and gladness in the presence of God was so real, whose sense of the evil to be fought was so vivid, whose battles with that evil were so valorous, whose passion of love for men was so utterly the outflow of his nature, whose knowledge of life was so concrete and intuitive that I cannot think of him as I write these words without emotion. The Christ type, while rare, is not unfamiliar. And if it were not essentially reproducible and basically historical, Paul's statement about Jesus Christ being "the first-born among many brethren" would have at bottom little ethical significance.

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[7] Enelow, *A Jewish View of Jesus*, p. 181.

It is apparent, I think, that essentially such a character "as the synoptic gospels depict" did live, that his person was seized upon and interpreted by the Messianic expectations of the Jewish people, and that after most of the bizarre colors of Jewish apocalypticism had been washed out of the Christian consciousness, Jesus was still to some devout Hellenist of the early second century who wrote the Gospel of John, "bread" and "light" and "life." Jesus was no lay figure upon which concepts and philosophies were hung. Back of all that men thought about him was the quality of life that he embodied. It was that quality and the spiritual energies released in men by contact with him which attracted the concepts to him. By the time that the value of one concept was exhausted the life had already departed to take up its abode in another.

This starting-point for our thinking about Jesus—that he was completely and unreservedly human—

has far-reaching implications. It implies that if there was something about him which seemed more than human, it was due to the richness and depth of his humanity, a thought with which in one form or other Horace Bushnell, Frederick W. Robertson, and Phillips Brooks have made us familiar. And it is to this more-than-human aspect that we must now turn.

IV

For it is apparent that when you have said that Jesus Christ was unreservedly human you have not said that which already in the pages of the New Testament has become the most significant thing about him. The second great fact about Jesus Christ is that through him men have come into a fresh and vital experience of God, into a sureness of the reality and presence of God, into a conviction of the quality of God's nature which has released energy and given direction for human living. Jesus Christ has embodied a supreme quality of human nature. He has also been a sacrament of God.

We use the word sacrament because there is no other word which seems to do justice to the variety and intensity of the experience of the divine which has come to men through contact with Jesus Christ. A sacrament in the Catholic tradition is an outward sign of an invisible grace, or gift of God. The supreme sacrament—the eucharist—requires for its efficacy three elements, the outgoing of God's nature, the external embodiment of that nature, and the proper attitude on the part of the recipient. A very rough symbol of sacramental experience might be furnished by an incident of my boyhood. I used to go down to the village power house which was near my home and touch the iron railing which was around the dynamo. There I would receive a slight shock which was interesting to a curious child. Afterwards I learned in the study of physics in school that the reason for that shock lay in the fact that the railing was in the dynamo's field of force and that some of the electric energy generated by it had been communicated to the railing. The railing looked like any other railing. It was an external sign. But the dynamo had communicated to it an invisible power of which the bystander might become aware through the proper attitude, the touching of the railing with the hand.

In our specifically human relations a photograph may have essentially sacramental value. When Shackleton and his men were in a perilous position in the depths of the Antarctic, in order to lighten their packs they threw away many supplies, including money. But photographs they kept.[8] Under such circumstances the photographs of dear ones at home were veritable gifts of life which secured the release of extra energy in the bodies of those who were striving to complete their journey and escape death in the frozen wastes.

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[8] Shackleton, *South*, p. 83.

Now it is a figure similar to that of the photograph which the author of *Hebrews* employs to describe the significance of the person of Jesus Christ, "the very image of His substance," or, as Moffat has it, "stamped with God's own character." Paul employs it in *II Corinthians*, "the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the likeness of God." The essential thought is that as a piece of metal took the image of the emperor or, as in our experience, a piece of paper takes the image of a loved one, so Jesus Christ revealed, in terms of humanity, the image of God.

An analogous sacramental experience may appear in our æsthetic appreciation of the divine. As a sunset may be a sacrament of the beauty of God and in the experience of a poet like Wordsworth has precisely that effect, so Jesus Christ in the experience of Christians has been a sacrament of the character of God.

A sacrament suggests, moreover, in the Catholic doctrine of the eucharist, what image and photograph by themselves do not suggest, and that is the presence of a divine intention, an act, a deed, an out-thrust of God toward men. Jesus Christ, in Christian experience, represents more than a mere drawing aside of the veil, a self-disclosure of deity. He is a veritable reaching forth of the hand of God to rescue men from sin, defeat, and despair. "In Christ I touch the hand of God." Salvation, accordingly, in the experience of the Christian, has represented a fusion of forces both within and without his own nature. No one has ever expressed this thought better than F. W. Robertson: "We are redeemed by the Life of God without us, manifested in the Person of Christ, kindling into flame the Life of God that is within us."[9] It is this experience which lies back of what the theologians have to say concerning "the work of Christ." And it is this tremendous fact of finding God through contact with Jesus Christ which lies behind all the formulæ which the Church has used—"the divinity of Christ," "the deity of Christ," "the second person of the Trinity," "the divine Word"—to interpret in terms of some regnant philosophy what has been a constant experience of vital Christianity.

To submit the evidence for the constancy of this experience would be like narrating the entire history of the Christian Church. Do we need to do more than suggest that it is God in Christ who is offered as the supreme sacrifice in the service of the Mass? Was

[9] From Robertson's sermon. *Christ's Estimate of Sin.*

not the reformation as a whole a moving away from the invocation of the Virgin back to a more direct contact with Christ himself? Are not the great festivals of the Church, Christmas and Easter, decisive evidences of the centrality of Christ for the Christian experience of the spiritual world? Is not the declaration, "God is in Christ," the rock of offense in Christianity for the adherents of other religions as well as the assurance and inspiration of all Christian missionary effort? It is only the churches which have cherished this declaration which have possessed a passion to propagate their faith.

Even those of us who are impatient with creedal formulæ are sometimes surprised to discover at some critical juncture how central Christ is in our own religious life and how dependent we are upon him for that spiritual tradition through which the Christian experience of God has been mediated to us. This fact came home to me recently when I was asked to put down upon one page the passages of the Bible which meant most to me, the passages, for instance, which I would take to a place of exile on a desert island, if I could take only one page of Scripture, about thirty verses in all. I said that I would take with me on such a venture, *Philippians* 3:7-14, Paul's declaration of supreme life purpose beginning, "What things were gain to me these have I counted loss for

Christ"; *Romans* 8:35-39, beginning, "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ"; *II Corinthians* 3:17, 18, Paul's assertion that the dominance of Christ means freedom of spiritual development; *Ephesians* 3:14-19, the glorious aspiration for a spiritual commonwealth bound together by the love of Christ "which passeth knowledge"; *John* 10:10, "I am come that they might have life and that they might have it more abundantly"; *John* 7:17, "If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine"; *Matthew* 25:34-40, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren ye have done it unto me." There were thirty verses of which I could say that I had come back to them over and over in my experience for a new sense of direction, new energy and assurance.

Then I noticed, as I reviewed these seven passages, that four were Pauline and related to Christ, and three were from the gospels and reputed to be words of Jesus. No one could read these passages without thinking of Jesus Christ as a continuing source of the experience of God. As a whole they combine a sense of freedom and abundance, vastness of outlook and aspiration, with the most intense personal devotion to one who makes possible for his followers a career of such vital quality.

I have called attention to these passages and to their dynamic effect in my own life because they testify to the sacramental influence of Jesus Christ in making God available to men. Such influence began during his historic career centuries ago, developed greatly during the generation following his death, and has continued to the present hour. The actuality of that continuing influence is so patent that we must put it down as the second great fact to be taken account of in estimating the present religious significance of Jesus.

V

And now what of tomorrow? For it is evident that today we are crossing a great divide in the evolution of Christianity. The transition apparent in the development of the modern temper, with its outlook upon nature and history, is at least as important as that which marked the passing of Christianity from Judaism into the spiritual interests and forms of thought characteristic of the Hellenistic world. As "Messiah" lost its significance when the gospel was preached to Greeks, so doctrinal formulæ associated with the person of Christ, precious to our fathers, have less and less significance today. Some sophisticated persons seem bent on beginning the development of religion all over again, starting from the bottom. From our point of view such an attempt is self-deceiving and as impracticable in religion as in art, science, statecraft, and the realm of domestic relations, for religion, as these other interests of mankind, develops through a vast process of cultural growth. Others have labored and we have entered into their labors.

But there is a common element in the approach to religion on the part of all men of the modern temper, regardless of their varying conclusions, which makes their venture of faith seem new at least to them. This common element lies in their conviction that they must approach the reputed truths and values of religion from the point of view of the verifiable in experience. Let a man build his faith on those attitudes and elements of belief which have been tested in experience, first in his own experience and then in the experience of others. He may go far in the development of his structure of faith, but he has to start there.

And the reason is not far to seek. The average man cannot be an expert in either history or philosophy. The historical and philosophical elements in religion, accordingly, while important, must always be secondary. The primary elements must be those which the man himself finds to be true and valuable in that struggle for the enhancement of life which lies at the heart of religion. Professor B. W. Bacon has stated this point of view quite accurately in the following words: "It is precisely in this field of persistently recurrent psychological experience, *and only here*, that an absolute test of the trustworthiness of the gospel lies within the reach of every man"[10] (italics Bacon's).

Now it is obvious that one may venture upon the experiment of verifying in experience the assumption that in all matters of religion one must bow to the teaching of the historic Church. Those of us who cannot make such an assumption with its omnibus guaranties must begin elsewhere. In this particular connection we are interested in asking to what elements in the tradition concerning Jesus Christ are modern Christians turning to discover that which is fundamentally true and valuable for them.

We have to acknowledge that they are not turning to the formulated doctrines of the Church concerning Christ, nor are they turning to the supernatural or miraculous investiture which accompanies the presentation of his figure in the gospels. It may be that in the course of their quest for faith they will come upon great realities embodied in the doctrines and confirmations of occurrences in the gospel record which seem at present unhistorical or at least doubtful. But the plain fact is they are not starting with either doctrines or such specific occurrences. They are turning rather to the great insights of Jesus, his assumptions, his principles and convictions, his attitudes toward God and men, to discover those elements which may be verified psychologically and sociologically in the experience of men today. And among all these elements of character and outlook associated with the name of Jesus none seems so utterly central or so challenging for present verification as that expressed in the phrase, "love to God and love to man."

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[10] Bacon in *Hibbert Journal Supplement, Jesus or Christ?* p. 221.

It is hardly necessary to suggest that this phrase is a summary of the noblest Jewish tradition which Jesus had inherited. "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul and with all thy mind" and "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself" were the two commandments upon which Jesus said "the whole law hangeth and the prophets." [11] It is also perfectly clear that Jesus gave a universality and an intensity to the meaning of these commandments which they had not possessed. The neighbor whom one was to love as himself might be separated from one by the racial and religious chasm which separated Jews from Samaritans. Even the enemy was to be loved, for God loved the prodigal and sent His rain on the just and the unjust. God Himself was more near and accessible to the loving spirit than men had supposed. "Love to man," moreover, was "like unto" and essential to "love to God," so that a solidarity grew up between these commandments which ultimately found supreme expression in the first epistle of John.

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[11] *Deut.* 6:5, *Lev.* 19:18, *Matt.* 22:37-40.

As one considers the joyous and expansive mood of New Testament Christianity, as he watches the spread of the new faith over the Roman Empire, gathering all races and classes into a community where, in ideal, at least, there was "neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free," but only immortal souls united in an eternal fellowship, as he studies the driving energy at the heart of the great movements of the Franciscans, the Friends, the Wesleyans, and the apostles of modern missions, he comes over and over again upon this central principle which animated the personality of Jesus. Christianity has seemed to become vital in the world as Christians have taken this great principle of Jesus seriously.

It is through the process of testing this principle of Jesus and his insights into life which are correlated with it, that Christians of the modern temper are moving toward an appreciation of his religious significance. Many elements in their thinking are at loose ends, but this end at least they have gotten hold of and they are intent upon following it to see where it leads. They feel that what they have already found in Jesus is nothing less than the disclosure of the possibility of a far richer and nobler synthesis of human life, both individual and social. They are thinking of this great principle of love as being like the closed circuit of contacts which connects a dynamo with various distributing centers of electric energy. When the circuit is closed, the energy flows through, lighting our streets, turning the wheels of industry, furnishing our transportation and communication and a vast variety of services from refrigeration in the pantry to entertainment through the motion picture and the radio. When the circuit is broken you have fires, darkness, devastation, and death.

So with this principle of love. When men display in their mutual relations the attitudes of patience, open-mindedness, the desire to share one another's lives and to participate in building together a world civilization of brotherly men, the circuits through which the divine creative energies of life may flow are closed and men move on toward an ever richer unity of experience. When bitterness, ill-will, hatred, and the selfish, grasping disposition prevails, the circuits are broken and family dissension, industrial conflict, and international strife ensue.

To say that the effort to test this principle involves no serious assumptions is of course ridiculous. It involves the initial assumption that men are worth loving, and the writer is of those who believe that the testing process cannot be permanently carried through with resolution and on a large scale without the assumption that love itself is at the very heart of the universe. But the disclosure of the assumptions that an invincible love requires will be itself a revelation, and in the process of informing love with intelligence, of searching out and attacking its enemies, of planning the strategy and the tactics of its conquest of the human order, men are going to make theological as well as sociological discoveries. The genius of these discoveries, however, is that they will come through the interaction of heroic practical effort and reason, through the total process of living which reaches out into both tradition and contemporary experience for life-giving elements of belief, rather than through methods of Biblical exegesis or of armchair academic skepticism.

Modern Christians are interested in this approach to the significance of the personality of Jesus for a variety of reasons. To begin with, it savors of the original method of Jesus himself with his invitation to "Follow me," "Come and see." It is the development of the great insight of the Apostle Paul expressed in his injunction, "Follow after love." It takes seriously the reputed words of Jesus, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto the least of these, ye have done it unto me." It cherishes the emphasis in John's gospel and epistles upon love as the key to spiritual knowledge. It builds upon the insights and achievements of the noblest Christian lives. It fits into the experimental mood of our time. It shares the teachable spirit of science. The responsibilities to which it leads are primarily practical and ethical rather than ecclesiastical and creedal. It meets on the part of the age itself a latent hunger for the organization of our world on a higher plane of spiritual unity which will not sacrifice individuality, akin to the longing for redemption in the Mediterranean world which saw the beginnings of Christianity. It carries with it the promise of the past, but it pivots on the challenge of the present and the future. It starts with an ideal, communicated by the contagion of a great personality, but it makes its way in the modern world by the use of all the intellectual resources and the powers of social organization available to man.

VI

And now we ask the inevitable question, "Are those who follow this approach to the religious significance of Jesus—the verification of his insights in experience—likely to come into that sacramental experience of God in Christ which has been one of the constant elements in vital Christianity?"

We are able to furnish no complete answer to this question, but we believe the following considerations have a bearing upon the answer. It is certain, to begin with, that the endeavor to take Jesus' law of love seriously will create an inner sympathy with those who share this endeavor and particularly with the one who gave the initial impulse in Western civilization to this great experiment. It is certain also that as men seek to realize this law in their own lives they will have a growing appreciation of the symbols and beliefs which have sustained their fellows in similar efforts, and among all such symbols and beliefs none have been so potent as those associated with the name of Christ.

It is clear, moreover, that love in itself is an abstraction, that it has no meaning apart from its embodiment in concrete personalities. Christian love has always taken its flavor and character from Christ.

Those, accordingly, who undertake to realize his quality of love will assume that attitude toward him which will give character and sustenance to their enterprise. Here one comes upon the fact that there was an intense quality in the love of Jesus Christ so unique and far-reaching that it has laid him open to criticism by Jewish scholars. Yet it is this unique "excessive" quality, uniting intimacy with God with kindness toward one's enemies, which has seemed both in New Testament times and in ours a revelation of the redemptive purpose of the Eternal. As Thor found among the giants of Jotunheim that the horn which he tried to drain was connected with the ocean, so those who seek in all honesty to plumb the depths of love which Christ revealed are likely to discover that they have come upon something inexhaustible. Call it sacramental, call it what you will, it is not likely that men will be able to embody such a love as that which animated the soul of Jesus unless they have as the object of love as he had a Divine Being so utterly worthy and satisfying that devotion to it can lift one out of himself in an act of self-giving both necessary and effortless. To walk with Jesus is to be followed by "the hound of heaven."

Nor is it likely that those who undertake such an endeavor as the living embodiment of the law of love as it is revealed in Jesus Christ will escape the influence of the Christian idea. Sooner or later such experimenters will discover that in the very midst of their own way is set up a "cross." They too will kneel in their Gethsemanes and hang upon their Calvarys. Is it not inevitable that the deepest conviction of the Christian faith—that a Life from beyond life abides in humanity to share its suffering in order to carry it to triumph over evil and death—is it not inevitable that such a conviction will appear to them in a new light? And is it not also inevitable that the career of the man through whom that reading of the book of life has gained its profound influence in the world will also appear in a new perspective? For the career of Jesus of Nazareth represents that point in human history where that reading came into focus on the screen of human experience. And it has remained true thus far in the unfolding of history that men have ever regained a sense of the reality and truth of that reading as they have returned to him. The Christian idea has always renewed its strength at the font of the Christian story. L. P. Jacks is right. "The Gospel," he says, "is neither a sermon nor a treatise on religion, but a story which tells how Christianity began in something that happened, in a deed that was done, in a life that was lived."[12] And that deed and that life were the deed and the life of Jesus.

[12] Jacks *Religious Perplexities*, pp. 75-76.

Will it not be true tomorrow as well as yesterday that as men in the endeavor to live like Jesus come under the influence of the Christian idea they will also find themselves thinking as they read the Christian story that "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself"?

How far this experimental approach, this testing of the insights of Jesus, will lead us into the sacramental experience of God in Christ we do not know. But we know at least this, that as we move along we shall move in the atmosphere of reality. For there is profound truth in the words of Gilbert Murray to the effect that "the things which we have called eternal, the things of the spirit and the imagination, always seem to lie more in a process than in a result, and can only be reached and enjoyed by somehow going through the process again."[13] By this token we know truth only by seeking it and suffering for it. We know beauty only by creating it. We know goodness only by holding to some ideal against a hostile world. By the same token we gain the deepest and most vital appreciation of Jesus Christ only as we enlist in the effort to make his central insight into the meaning of life regnant in one's own experience and in society. Did not Jesus himself say, "Ex-

[13] Murray in *The Legacy of Greece*, ed. by Livingstone, p. 7.

cept ye take up your cross and follow me ye cannot be my disciples"?

We shall not bandy words about "the finality of Christ" nor attempt to prejudge the future. The field is open for any one at any time to mean more to men than Jesus has meant. If any one can give us a vision of God more satisfying than that of Jesus, if he can make God more real and accessible, man's life more rich and abundant, fellowship with God and man more intense and expansive than Jesus made it, if he can meet the needs of the humblest and illumine the dark hours as Jesus could not, then he will inaugurate a revolution in religion comparable to that associated with the name of the Nazarene.

It is apparent, however, that the more novel movements of religious thought in our world today are not developing in this direction. They are moving away from rather than toward intercourse with any God whatsoever. The cult of humanism, for instance, which is now developing around university centers does not desire to move beyond Jesus. It desires rather to make an entirely different approach to the meaning of life. In fact, to the honest and frank humanist Jesus must appear a pathetic deluded figure, full of infantilisms, with a pitiful regressive belief in a fatherly God who was concerned for the welfare of His children, with a paranoiac sense of the importance of his own mission, dying at last, as G. Stanley Hall suggests, in disillusioned despair. Certainly a robust humanist can hardly help viewing Jesus without an estranged feeling of superiority. Even Socrates was too "chummy" with that *dæmon* of his to suit a thorough-bred humanist. The real historic saints of humanism, it is now perfectly evident, are Lucretius the Epicurean and Spinoza the Pantheist.

As for ourselves, our choice is made. The movement inaugurated by Jesus of Nazareth does not seem to us an aberration of the human mind. His career seems rather the focus in human history of the redemptive purpose of God. In his insights and character we find the promise of a higher synthesis of life whose bond is love. When we think of God it is his image that comes into our minds, and when we think of God's presence now in the human order we think of it as the continuing incarnation of that divine spirit which first came clearly into human vision in the person of Christ.[14] It is true that we lack today a dominant coherent philosophy that can furnish categories for the expression of the spiritual reality which has been revealed through Jesus and his movement, categories which can do for us what the Stoic meta-

[14] On the sense in which Christ continues to be present with his followers, see the satisfying discussion in Baillie, *The Place of Jesus Christ in Modern Christianity,* pp. 195-202.

physics did for the early Christians. But we think of our experience of God in Christ as being continuous with theirs and we sympathize with the declaration of Shailer Mathews, who says, in speaking of "the faith of Modernism": "It may not use the precise vocabulary of the Schoolmen or the Alexandrian fathers, but it believes in the Christ those Christians interpreted to their ages. And it will use their very terms rather than deny their truth, for it is the successor of those men's faith, the inheritor of their deepest convictions." [15]

We do not know what changes the future may have in store. It seems probable as we have already suggested that under the influence of the organic view of the world we shall emphasize the religious significance of the entire historical movement which centers in the person of Christ rather than attempt to disengage his figure from the situation in which it emerged and from the reaction to him on the part of the world. From this point of view the revelation of God through Jesus and his movement is still in process of development. As for the interpretation of this process, it seems probable that Christians of a modern temper will have to achieve a philosophy of history before they will be able to develop again a coherent theology.

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[15] Mathews, *The Faith of Modernism,* p. 125.

History, theology, and Christian experience move on in the atmosphere of modernity toward the future, with experience ever the selective and creative factor, molding interpretations of history and theology into forms which will serve the enhancement of life. And the dynamic energies of that experience today are being generated between two magnetic poles of religious belief. One is the faith in a Christlike God at work within the cosmic and the human order. The other is the hope of "a beloved community" which, in ideal, will embrace all mankind—the human goal of the divine purpose. Faith in the God of Jesus and the hope of His Kingdom—these are the magnetic poles of Christian experience, and the current of life between them is the spirit of love which seeks to bring the whole range of human activity within the field of the redeeming power of the Eternal.

Does the fellowship, human and divine, contemplated by such faith, hope, and love constitute a reasonable goal and workable method of human existence? Or is it challenged by permanent conditions which make its realization a fatuous dream? It is to that question we must now turn.

I can hope but little from those who live without interest in the metaphysical aspect of the religious problem, and only study it in its social or political aspects. I can hope but very little for the enrichment of the spiritual treasury of mankind from those men or from those peoples who, whether it be from intellectual inertia, or from superficiality, or from scientificism, or from any other cause, are unmoved by the great and eternal disquietudes of the heart. I can hope nothing from those who say, "We must not think about these things!" I can hope even less from those who believe in a heaven and a hell such as those which we believed in when we were children; and still less can I hope from those who affirm with a fool's gravity, "All this is but myth and fable; he who dies is buried and there's an end of it." I can hope for something only from those who do not know, but who are not resigned not to know; from those who fight unrestingly for the truth and put their life in the fight itself rather than in the victory.

—Unamuno, *Essays and Soliloquies*,

pp. 158-159.

Chapter Seven

FELLOWSHIP AND HUMAN FATE

No one can enter upon the experiment of attempting to live by Christ's principle of love without meeting the contradictory facts which appear to make the entire venture a fanatical one.

There are those who at once arise and say, "the ideal of a beloved community, the kingdom of God, the city of gods and men, is a dream of ancient lineage. But life has been too much for it. There are hard, forbidding conditions upon this planet which render the idea of a friendly power behind phenomena an impossible one. Man's history is a tragic career of incalculable pain. The final tragedy is death. 'On him and all his race the slow sure doom falls, pitiless and dark.' How can man have fellowship with a Being responsible for such a career of suffering and such a fate? And is not fellowship even on the human plane forever inhibited by strife? Is there not a warfare to man upon earth? Are not the insatiable cravings of men perpetually in conflict? Is not the plain reading of the book of life to the mature intelligence, that fellowship is for the intimate relations of the like minded and that outside of those relations man must conquer and use what he can and endure what he must? Why continue now, with our knowledge, to project upon the universe this infantile dream of a family fellowship—human and divine?"

The issue here is old yet ever new. It is the issue as to whether the evils of life are so fixed and massive, so fateful in the ancient sense as to make this venture on both its divine and its human side an unreasonable one. Can man have fellowship with God in this world of evil? May he work hopefully for the fellowship of his own kind? These are the questions for which we now seek whatever answer may be available.

I

What shall we think of evil—that is the way the question is usually stated. But there is a question prior to that. It is the question, where shall we think of evil. A great many of the difficulties which arise in connection with this problem arise from thinking of evil in a wrong context. Evil are those facts and conditions of life which prevent or impede the realization of a purpose of good. It is "good" which gives reality to evil—the vision of a good which exists in ideal and for which men seek actualization.

Now when we think of evil in this context is it not apparent that the primary attitude of man toward evil must be the intent to fight it? Is not L. P. Jacks right when he answers the question, "How shall we think of evil?" with the reply, "We must think ill of it."?[1] And does not the sense of the primacy of that answer furnish the motive for the efforts to eliminate disease, banish poverty, remove ignorance, stop war, abolish crime, and all other conditions which obviously impede the progress of the race toward the ideals of "good" which have become the common possession of civilized men? Any attitude which removes evil from the context of the good which it appears to thwart is bound to have disastrous consequences both upon the logic of thought and the morale of living.

Now after a man assumes this attitude of opposition to evil which is the negative side of his devotion to a good, he is in a position to make other discoveries about evil. He discovers that out of this combat with evil things a good emerges which was not there before. Some part of that evil at least has been transmuted into good. A crude material illustration may make clear what often happens. Between Rochester and Syracuse, N. Y., there is some of the finest muck land in the world. This muck land was formerly a swamp. The swamp has been drained, putting at the disposal of the owners an area enormously productive. Why is it so productive today? Is it in spite of the fact that it was once a swamp? No, because of it. The swamp has been a catch-all, into which has been carried the silt, the rich top soil of many hillsides. The swamp had seemed an unrelieved evil; but boldly combated and organized, it has yielded a harvest of good, completely unavailable except for the fact that it had originally been there.

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[1] Jacks, L. P., in Jones, *Religious Foundations*, p. 106.

There are many incidents in man's long combat with evil conditions which confirm the observation that evil may be transmuted into an otherwise unrealizable good. Cold, famine, and disease have furnished incentives to man's effort to master the forces of nature. Slavery and war have yielded up an increment of progress in the development of social organization. The evil to be remedied has proven in every realm a key to new stores of knowledge and power.

Even when the struggle with evil is unsuccessful, if the combat is waged with courage and determination, the principle still holds. An otherwise unrealizable good is achieved. A football game for the state championship in Ohio during my college days always recurs to my memory when I think of this truth. On one of the teams there was a diminutive quarterback, the smallest man I have ever seen on a first-class team. And no quarterback ever had more to do. His own line could not hold the attack of the opposition and the game was replete with runs by the opposing backs in a broken field. And all through that entire afternoon of play, whenever the quarterback was the only player between the opposing runner and the goal, this slight individual never failed to get his man. When he returned to the attack he ran his team with dash and verve even though the score was piling up against him. His team lost the game, but at its close his fellow-players carried him off the field on their shoulders. He too had lost, but he had lost greatly. From defeat he had brought forth a glory of courage and fortitude which victory would hardly have disclosed. The greatness of the great loser is all his own. Suffering in defeat seems to be the dark room in which alone the ultimate unconquerable dignity of the human spirit is revealed.

Through many centuries thoughtful men have observed this fact—the fact that when evil is fought with determination, though unsuccessfully, there is achieved in the combat a good which was not in existence before. So Euripides has Hecuba say in *The Trojan Women* that without the destruction of Troy

> "We had not been this splendor and our wrong
> An everlasting music for the song
> Of earth and heaven." [2]

So the unknown prophet of the exile interpreted the suffering of the Servant of the Lord as the vicarious sacrifice of one through whose stripes we are healed. So Christianity has found in a crucified Saviour a revelation of the redemptive purpose of a God who would endure even a shameful execution to rescue mankind from death. In all of these instances you have evil which has been fought, which has been endured in suffering and desolation, and which has ultimately, through the attitude of loyalty to the best, been transmuted into a good, otherwise unknown.

It is the vastness and universality of this process of the transmutation of evil into good which has given rise to the illusion that evil is a form of good, which in turn has tended to make men quiescent in its presence. The error here is the failure to see just how the good which is born out of evil comes into existence. It comes into existence only as a by-product of the effort to combat evil. The transmuted evil consists of sparks which are struck off the evil thing as the hammer of holy purpose seeks to destroy it. There can be no parleying with evil any time, any where.

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[2] Euripides, *The Trojan Women.* Trans. by Gilbert Murray.

II

But now we come to the real crux of the problem of evil as we meet it in our time. The crux of the problem is found in the large amount of evil which to our mortal vision is not transmutable. We have pointed out in another connection how some of the ancient solutions of this problem have broken down. Once man gets a glimpse of the universe as a world of order, once he realizes the strength of the hypothesis of evolution, according to which the past, while supporting the present, may also be a drag upon it, once he sees that evil itself consists simply of the conditions which thwart the creative purpose of good, the view of evil as the work of a malignant personal power tends to fade out.

Nor does the view that all of the persistent evils of life are due to human sin suffice. Those who take this view cannot guess

> the traps life gets you in,
> So much more puzzling than mere sin.[8]

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[8] From Christopher Morley's poem *Parsons' Pleasure.*

For many of us in the writer's generation the war gave the final blow to this view. We saw the war's vast stupidity and vulgarity, we felt its relentless disintegrating pressure on personality in camp and trench life. The stench of human carrion on the battlefield, the cry of wounded boys in the sorting hospitals, whimpering with pain, the hatred and the blood lust, the wrong that had become right and the right that had become treason, the thousands of women giving their bodies to anyone who came along, the crushed, poverty-stricken desolation of myriads of homes, lent cogency to that picture of the reptilian nature of life which we had found in the writings of Thomas Hardy. Some cosmic dinosaur seemed to have lurched and crushed ten million men. It seemed to be an intellectual relief to give up the attempt to find any meaning in the process that a moral intelligence could appreciate. Edwin Arlington Robinson expressed the feelings of the generation which passed through the war when he wrote in *Tristram*:

> There are some ills and evils
> Awaiting us that God could not invent;
> There are mistakes too monstrous for remorse
> To fondle or to dally with, and failures
> That only fate's worst fumbling in the dark
> Could have arranged so well.[4]

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[4] Robinson, *Tristram*, p. 199.

It is the war and the post-war experience which furnishes the emotional setting for the revival from the point of view of naturalism of an ancient solution for the problem of persistent evil. According to this view we behold in our universe either the unconscious workings of a vast dynamic mechanism or the strivings of a being whose purposes are so utterly indifferent to human happiness and welfare that they remain practically inscrutable. In neither case have we a God beyond man with whom we need be concerned.

The impression is growing up that upon this view the problem of evil is gotten rid of. It is gotten rid of theoretically by the simple device of giving up the goods which evil appears to thwart. Desire only what you can have and you will meet no evil. Presto! Evil is gone. Great is this naturalistic magic.

And yet the strange fact is that with this obvious solution at hand mankind has never taken to it readily. The difficulty, of course, is that mankind hates to give up its more important desires, particularly the desires to achieve, to love, and to live—all of which are essential to the persistence of the race. The obvious thing to do with these desires in a crisis, according to the naturalistic theory, is to give them up. If we could give them up, then evil would be gone (Schopenhauer).

What is wrong with this picture? The logic is excellent, but practical embodiment is impossible. In the long run men will not give up their deepest and noblest desires even when nature seems to be against them. The Thomas H. Huxleys and the Bertrand Russells with all their naturalistic logic are rebels. If their end has to be despair, they would have it an "unyielding" despair. They throw down the gauntlet to the resistant evils of the world. They profess at bottom, from the naturalistic point of view, the sentiment of Senancour which Unamuno heralds as the slogan of all heroic living, "Man is perishable. That may be; but let us perish resisting, and if it is nothingness that awaits us, do not let us so act that it shall be a just fate."[5]

The agnostic discovers that the conditions which thwart the realization of the basic desires of human nature bring to him the same inevitable agony that they bring to the devout. "Death is Death," says John Morley in his *Recollections*, to believer and unbeliever alike. Unbeliever as well as believer finds it difficult to reconcile himself to the fact that

> It's all Nothing;
> It's all a world where bugs and emperors
> Go singularly back to the same dust.[6]

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[5] Quoted by Unamuno, *The Tragic Sense of Life*, p. 263.

[6] From Edwin Arlington Robinson's poem, *Ben Jonson Entertains a Man from Stratford.*

And whether the ultimate moral nothingness be called "creative evolution" or some other high-sounding phrase makes little difference. The despair of a non-theistic thinker like H. Wildon Carr no sophistication can conceal. "It is also disheartening to reflect," he says, "on the vanity of life. Try as I will to encourage myself to pursue a life of high purpose, I know in my heart that it counts for naught in the universe of life, that the greatest individual achievement is no more than the flourishing of a leaf on the tree of humanity," [7] and he might have added—a tree, which itself is destined to disappear in a moment of cosmic time. Why not anticipate that outcome by effacing all desire, by seeking to approximate that sublime indifference to human effort and all its values which seems at times to be the attitude of the universe itself? And now we are on a highway that is ancient indeed, that leads back to Gautama Siddhartha meditating under his tree of Enlightenment. Only, Western naturalism with all its unconscious sympathies with Buddhism is without any law of Karma which gave an ultimate moral significance to the universal order. For naturalism can hardly be sure of the concept of "law" or "cause" any more. So that the attitudes of

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[7] Carr, *Changing Backgrounds in Religion and Ethics*, pp. 205-206.

Buddhism as assumed by sophisticated Westerns suffer inevitably from the affectations of a pose.

The plain fact is that the view of the world which seeks to get rid of evil by getting rid of the desires to achieve, to love and to live, which are continually thwarted by the conditions of our existence, is merely a paper solution. Practically, it leaves man where he was before, desiring to live, battling with resistant evils which threaten to destroy him and suffering the pains which they inflict. In addition, naturalism deprives him of the encouragement, the faith in the existence of an ultimate meaning for his suffering, the consolation of a divine comradeship, the sense of struggling not unhopefully in a worthy conflict, which the religion of the Western world has brought to men in their distress.

The intellectual and spiritual *élite* of the naturalistic school disguise this outcome of their theory by retreating in detachment from the scene of the human *mêlée* to the vantage-ground of æsthetic vision. So Lucretius tells us that "nothing is more gladdening than to dwell in the calm high places firmly embattled on the heights by the teaching of the wise, whence you can look down on others, and see them wandering hither and thither, going astray as they seek the way of life. . . . Ah, miserable minds of men, blind hearts"![8] So Nietzsche tells us that it is by the device of art that we may emancipate ourselves from the terrible experience, contemplating it as something outside ourselves.[9] So Lippmann in the passage already quoted assures us that whether life be "comedy," "high tragedy," or "plain farce," "the wise man can enjoy it."

But the illusion of art is fragile and a slight shift in emotional tone will destroy it. The pose which this illusion involves and its collapse is delicately suggested in those lines of Rupert Brooke entitled "The Hill." The young man and the young woman have gloried in their emancipation from the desire for immortality.

"And when we die
All's over that is ours; and life burns on
Through other lovers, other lips," said I. . . .

. . . .

"We shall go down with unreluctant tread
Rose-crowned into the darkness." Proud we were
And laughed, that had such brave, true things to say,
. . . And then you suddenly cried, and turned away.[10]

Yes, and so the Thomas Huxleys, the John Morleys, the William Jameses have turned away, but I suppose they were only infants that had not attained to this so-called adult superiority to life and the fate of man, which is offered to us once more in our time as the summit of all wisdom.

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[8] Lucretius, *On the Nature of Things,* Book II. Trans. by Bailey.

[9] Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy,* section 24.

[10] From *Collected Poems of Rupert Brooke.* Copyright, 1915, by Dodd, Mead & Company, Inc.

Into what a strange cycle of thought one is thus drawn by naturalism. The naturalistic thinker starts out in an emotional glow to wage war upon theism because theists allow men to take a moral holiday. "Pippa's song, 'God's in his heaven and all's right with the world'—that shows where you theists land," he says. But he himself finishes by standing on a peak of contemplation, enjoying in detachment the human scene regardless of its character or its result. Pippa's song has never been good Christianity, but it comes perilously near to suggesting the pose of æsthetic naturalism.

Naturalism as a solution of the problem of evil is sound only upon the basis that life itself with all the values which have emerged in the course of its development can if necessary be given up with full consent of will under the pressure of the reptilian indifference of nature.

But let the individual and the race be unable to commit hara-kiri; let life be esteemed for the values which are disclosed in it; let man once choose those values as the soul's portion; let him once say of those values in the spirit of Job, "though they slay me yet will I trust them"—let this attitude be assumed and one has crossed a great divide, the divide that separates every form of naturalism, ancient and modern, from every other view that finds a spiritual trend and meaning in the universe with which man can ally himself with moral confidence. Evil indeed is still here—the resistant forces which thwart the realization of the supreme values of man's experience and the apparent purposes of that cosmic power whose character is reflected in these values. Only now on any spiritual as distinguished from any naturalistic approach to the problem, life discloses forces which are destined to overcome evil, instead of being itself as in naturalism ultimately, although disguisedly, the evil that may have to be overcome.

III

If naturalism is discarded, are we then to be left with the view that the purposes of the spiritual power at work in the universe can be permanently thwarted? Is God lacking in power or goodness or both? This is the ancient dilemma. What has modernity to say about it?

It is perfectly apparent that modern religious thought has no clear answer to these questions. There may never be clear answers. In fact, if the organic analogy which presents man as a part over against the whole has any validity, then while man may learn ever more of the whole he can never entirely assume the point of view of the whole, and his knowledge of the whole will remain forever incomplete. Man is destined to be forever an explorer in the midst of his world.

But this permanent incompleteness of man's knowledge may not deter him from making progress in dealing with the most subtle and difficult of his problems. And modernity, we believe, reveals some progress in dealing with this problem of evil. May we suggest two insights which modernity may claim as its contribution?

First, we are discovering that thinking upon the problem of evil is most valuable when it is directed at specific concrete evils and their removal rather than at evil in general. In its biological development thinking has been an eminently practical affair. It has been the instrument of the organism in enhancing the value of life. Its speculative ventures have to justify themselves in the long run by their contribution to the ongoing of the human as a whole. Theoretical views of evil which sap the strength and courage of man for dealing with evil in the concrete are biologically unsound.

In the second place, we have succeeded in locating one of our constant intellectual perils in thinking about this problem. That is the peril of universalizing from one aspect of our experience. We have learned how charged is all our thought on such matters with concrete experiences, which have selected out from all possible theories those which are most congenial to themselves. So men have proceeded from the experience of the awfulness and persistence of evil to the conviction of the finiteness of God. On the other hand, in their longing for certainty and an inexhaustible resource they have posited an infinitely powerful and good God who doeth all things well but whose deeds are so refracted in the medium of our ignorance that we cannot appreciate their perfection. Both of these views are partial. Neither does justice to all the facts. Yet they seem to constitute, once more, magnetic poles to which individuals are drawn according to the character of their most poignant needs. Christianity, historically, has made room for both of these views. It has maintained in its theology the infinity of God and His absolute sovereignty over the world. On the other hand, it has been dualistic, with a concrete evil spirit and a permanent abode for him in a cosmic dungeon.

The contribution of modernity, accordingly, has been to emphasize the practical aspects of the problem, the struggle with specific evils rather than with evil. And, after all, has not the trend of Christian thought and experience been in the same direction? Christianity has never possessed a consistent logical theory of evil. In fact, as Baron von Hügel has pointed out, it has "immensely deepened and widened, it has further revealed . . . the fact, the reality, the awful potency and baffling mystery of sorrow, pain, sin, things which abide with man across the ages." "But Christianity has also," he goes on to say, "immensely increased the capacity, the wondrous secret and force, which issues in a practical living, loving transcendence, utilization, transformation of sorrow and pain and even of sin." [11]

Christian views of evil have endured because of their practical benefits. By its dualistic picture of the two great powers in conflict in the cosmic arena Christianity has encouraged men to fight evil, personified in the devil and his angels. By its epic story of the crucifixion and resurrection of Christ it has revealed that the worst evils may be transmuted into good. By its doctrines of incarnation and atonement it has brought to consummation the tradition of ancient tragic drama that, through union with the divine, man may overcome the evil which threatens to destroy him. By its childlike trust in the utter redemptive goodness of God exhibited in the "cross," by its disclosure of His participation in man's struggle with sin and sorrow, and by its assurance of God's mercy to the sinful and His continuing and sustaining presence with man upon his pilgrimage, it has, as Baron von Hügel suggests, encouraged the soul "to sob itself out" and thus experience that catharsis, that complete purging of evil in which Aristotle found the secret of the cleansing effect of high tragedy, and Freud the means of relief from psychic frustration. And finally, Christianity has breathed into men's souls a faith that evil can and will be conquered, a faith of the same fundamental nature as that which has inspired the great explorers and discoverers of history.

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[11] F. von Hügel, *Essays and Addresses on the Philosophy of Religion*, p. 111.

The value of such a faith is beyond all reckoning. Those who have heard Captain Noel describe the Mount Everest expedition of 1924 remember his emphasis upon the three qualities which were demanded of all those who were allowed to participate in that great event. Those qualities, according to the Captain, were good health, experience in mountain-climbing, and faith that the mountain could be conquered. This faith the Captain said was considered all-important, for it made a decisive difference in the spirit in which one approached the inevitable obstacles. With faith that the mountain could be and would be conquered these obstacles would appear only difficulties which ingenuity and heroic effort could remove. Without faith they might seem permanent conditions which forbade the venture.

It seems to me that the Everest expedition of 1924, in which Mallory and Irvine lost their lives in the final attempt to gain the summit, is a parable of man's struggle with evils which thwart the realization of such a supreme ideal as fellowship. Will those evils stand forever between man and the realization of his vision of the city of gods and men, as the final six hundred feet of mountainous rock separated those two heroic adventurers from their goal? We do not know. But we do know that the spirit in which men will deal most successfully with those evils is the spirit in which Leigh Mallory and his companion made their last effort to conquer Everest—the spirit of faith that the task can be accomplished.

If it be the fate of man to perish at last on the cold and indifferent slopes of the universe with the great values of his life as yet unrealized, then let him perish resisting. If the universe in its blind fecundity has produced a creature which alone has consciousness of the forces at work about and through him, then let him cherish the ideals which have breathed significance and purpose into his life and which have inspired him with the belief that in the long last goodness will not yield the palm to mere power. It is the Christian's faith that in the struggle for these ideals man is not alone, he is sustained by a Spiritual Life which is in him yet ever beyond him, and which makes his attitude of devotion to his ideals more than a gesture, no matter how heroic.

The question of the finiteness or the infinity of God does not seem soluble by any instruments of human reasoning. Nor does it seem possible, with our limited knowledge of the nature of the universe, to apportion responsibility for conditions which thwart the realization of man's highest ideals. We certainly cannot identify a good God with the universe as we know it, and the nature of the relationship between the good God, whom man encounters in his struggle for the Best, and the universe at large is at present beyond both science and philosophy. It seems probable that the inductive approach alone will never give us more than a finite God, and that the outreach toward infinity will always partake of the nature of poetry and art. This does not mean that the latter approach is metaphysically less important than the former. It may mean, however, that the logical methods most congenial to modern thinking will never give us adequate access to the divine.

But it does not appear that a decision on these questions of theory is essential to man's progress in dealing with evils as he finds them. Evils he can fight and destroy. Evils he can transmute into good and in the fellowship of a Spiritual Power whose goodness is reflected in man's ideals and whose presence is man's unfailing support. With his soul open to God and with his mind open to all the most realistic considerations which determine the high strategy of his struggle, he remains to the end a warrior—a happy warrior, it may be—in the divine conquest of tragedy.

It is our fate that fellowship, human and divine, should be a faith, a perpetually challenging vision, a venture to the end. And a religion which carries this venture at its heart must be a courageous and daring religion. If it is fearful in either the intellectual or the moral realm it will lose its basis of appeal.

IV

The issue of death is a question by itself. What can fellowship do with death?

Our answer is that fellowship alone can do anything hopeful with death. The facts which science offers us are barren of assurance. As the astronomers of the eighteenth century explored the heavens without finding God, so the physiologists and the psychologists explore the human being today without finding anything that they can call a soul. They find neurones, hormones, and glands galore, and in their more romantic moods, complexes and instincts, but never a soul. The historian explores the religious tradition of the race and finds the belief in the soul tied up with ideas and practices which belong to an outgrown primitive culture. "If you believe in the soul, find it for us," is the challenge of our generation. It is a challenge we have no desire to escape.

For it is increasingly apparent that these analytical studies which we have cited represent the following of a false scent as far as the search for the soul is concerned. The soul is not in the pineal gland, or the liver, or the brain, or in any other portion of the human anatomy. Whatever else the soul is, it is something which pertains to the whole of man, including all his relationships and not to any part of his organism. The attempt to discover the soul by any analytical investigation ultimately leads us as far astray as the blind men were led by the elephant. No, the elephant was not like a rope, a fan, a tree, a wall, or a snake. Nor could you put all of these conceptions together, or arrange them in any combination which would give you an adequate picture of the elephant. If objects of physical nature thus elude our understanding when analyzed into parts, how much more those objects which are infected with what for lack of a better term we call spirit.

We shall probably not find a better clue to the meaning of "soul" than we find in ordinary speech when we speak of the "soul" of a building. Go into a great cathedral, like Notre Dame or Chartres, and you realize that something tremendous is there which is more than stone and glass. Nor will any study of stone and glass let you into the secret of what that something is. You know that no draftsman's tools or test tubes or chemical solvents or any other of the measuring instruments of modern science will give you the slightest clue to the meaning of the presence which fills those arches. You know, of course, that if the building were not complete in a physical way, its power to communicate its message would be impaired. If the spires were knocked off, the windows broken, and the pillars crushed, something would be missing; and yet you realize also that the "soul" of the building is not in materials, wonderful as they are.

Gradually you become aware that to find its soul you must leave the building altogether, and go back by means of your historical imagination and live over again the life of the Middle Ages in France. You must cross the fields of Beauce and walk through the streets of Paris with the throngs of worshipers on the way to these great shrines. Lords and ladies, monks, peasants, and guildsmen, mothers with sick children to be blessed, courtesans, artists, and students—all are there. Slowly it comes over you as to what the soul of the building is made of. It is not made of stone and glass at all. It is made of nothing that you can measure or see. It consists of a thousand years of the agonies and tears, the civic pride, the intellectual eagerness, the lovely visions, the ineffable longings, and the spiritual hunger of our aspiring humanity. Stone and glass are but the instruments, the physical body, through which the men of the Middle Ages uttered their prayer unto God. And it is in proportion to our own historical imagination and our own spiritual hunger that we can enter into that prayer and find our own souls enwrapped once more by the "soul" of Chartres or Notre Dame.

Now if we cannot appreciate the "soul" of man's greatest achievements, such as his cathedrals, by the study of stone and glass, how much more thoroughly impossible it is to appreciate man, the creator, by measuring muscular reaction, or counting neurones, or administering pituitary extract. If you are in earnest about finding the human soul you must go where the evidence is. And the evidence is not to be found in either physiological or psychological measurements, but in the great literature, the great art, the great religions, the great achievements of man. When you come away from that evidence, you come away with the conviction that it is a vast spiritual life which is expressing itself through man, the physical animal, as the life of mediæval France expressed itself through its cathedrals. And while the naturalistic thinker will say, "Ah, what you mean by soul is simply human culture," the religious man will not be satisfied with that phrase which means exactly nothing at all, unless he carries it back until human culture merges in that great life of the world in which all the strivings and the creative longings which have made the spiritual history of man originate. To the religious man that vaster life is ultimately the life of God. And the "soul"? The "soul" is that unique quality of the human by which the richness of the divine life is able to focus and express itself through physical bodies, as the life of the Middle Ages focused and expressed itself through stone and glass.

The soul, then, is of the body but beyond the body. Just as poetry is more than grammar, as music is more than rhythm, so man is more than a physical body and that more we call his soul.

We think of the soul, accordingly, as a quality in the organization of the physical elements of a man, as a painting is a quality in the organization of colors. As a painting is an organization of the wonder and beauty of the world into pigments, the soul is the organization of the value-creating and achieving life of the world into this animal form we call a human body. The great assumption lying behind this belief is the assumption of a divine value-creating and achieving life at work in the order of nature, a life which it is the function of soul to appropriate and express through men.

The problem that remains here is the problem of individuality. This organization of the values of the world by the individual human, does it perish with the death of the body? Is this divine value-creating process in the universe like a chalk cliff, rising only upon the annihilated forms of millions of organisms? Or is human individuality a new potency which has emerged in the evolution of life, opening the way to greater values and gathering such strength in the process of its development that it is able to survive the shock of death? Does individuality with the promise of immortality represent, like sight, consciousness, and speech, a new stage in the on-going of life?

We do not know. But the idea of fellowship may make a contribution to our thought at this point. For certain it is that without individualities the fellowship contemplated in this book has no meaning. It is individuality which accounts for the variety of human culture and achievement. There, for instance, is a waterfall. The waterfall penetrates the "soul" of one man and is transmuted into electric power. It penetrates the "soul" of another and becomes a poem, a painting, or a symphony. The waterfall is the same. It is its union with the individuality of human souls which makes the difference. Human fellowship derives all its complexity, all its possibilities of richness and enlargement, from the fact that individuality is a quality of that soul-nature by which man has been able to transmute the facts and events of the universe into values.

A crude physical analogy may convey some idea of the function of individuality. Electricity is here, everywhere. It may even be the substance of all things. But for certain purposes dynamos are necessary. They make electric energy available for use in certain situations and for particular purposes. So with the divine value-creating life of the world. It is at work everywhere. But for the purposes of fellowship, the expression of the divine in creative love, individualities are necessary. The richness of human fellowship is a function of individualities, and unless these individualities have some permanence in the fellowship-achieving process of the universe, human lives are but flecks of foam, glistening for a moment in the light of history, as the dark wave of terrestrial fecundity advances toward nothingness.

Our suggestion is, then, that the "soul" is no substance or thing; it is the name we give to the divine life of the world, as it interpenetrates the human animal and suffuses him with value-creating qualities; that supreme among these values is the experience of fellowship with God and men; that essential to the depth and richness of that fellowship is the individuality of the human; and that the permanence of the individualities which participate in the experience is essential to the larger significance of fellowship. The ultimate issue here is not the issue of soul and body at all. It is the issue as to the nature of this value-creating life of the world, the nature of God. It is in the context of faith in a good God and in the value of fellowship not in the context of autopsies and séances, that we can hold the belief in man's survival of death.

But if a man does believe in a good God and in the supreme significance of the experience of fellowship, then it is probable that he will look with more respect upon the age-long tradition which centers around the idea of immortality than some of the emancipated persons of our generation are inclined to do. He will probably feel that the urge toward a continued existence which has been confessed by the noblest minds, from Socrates and Plato to Sir William Osler and Miguel de Unamuno, is something more than the petulant desire of spoiled children of nature. And when he considers the practical value of this belief, its comfort in bereavement, the deep philosophic sense of the worth of man which it tends to generate, its subtle penetration of human culture so that a civilization which lacked it would be like air from which most of the oxygen had been removed; when he realizes that the world in which we hold this faith is, as William James suggested, far more many-sided than any scientific or religious sect will allow, a complex and open world full of unpredictable possibilities, so that at no stage in the history of the planet could the actual future have been foreseen—then it may be that his experience of life will begin to take on a pattern like that of a jig-saw puzzle for which the belief in immortality furnishes the decisive key block. If a faith in immortality like that of Christianity is sound, then these facts of human experience which we have just cited have a logical meaning and significance. They fit into a view which makes the world not merely a place of hope and sentiment, but of reason and purpose. Without such a faith these facts remain incoherent, leaving us with a strong impression that at the heart of the universe there is a basic unreason and that life itself is a struggle amid the waves of a permanent moral confusion.

The belief in immortality which one holds in the context of these great assumptions of the existence of a good God and the supreme value of fellowship is indeed a faith, but it is more than a guess. It is as truly an inference based upon the facts of human need and experience as the inference of Columbus, whose facts suggested to him that by sailing west he could reach India, and as the inference of Schliemann, who concluded from the facts of ancient history that by excavating at Hissarlik he could uncover the ruins of Troy.

It is true that up to the present we have not succeeded in identifying any unmistakable evidence of man's survival of death, and we may never be able so to do. We may lack the capacity for appreciating such evidence, even if it were accessible, as an unborn child lacks the capacity for appreciating the nature of its existence after birth. And as long as such evidence is missing, this belief in which we are interested will always be characterized, especially for the critically minded, by the element of uncertainty. The same situation obtains in science. Even after Leverrier had perfected his calculations which led to the theory that an unknown planet in a definite region of the heavens was the cause of the discrepancy in the motion of Uranus, it required Galle with his telescope to find Neptune and to produce that "click" of certainty which all human beings crave.

But we lack any telescope for beholding the form of immortal life and it is possible that we may always be in the position of Adams, the young Cambridge astronomer, who is described by Noyes in his *Watchers of the Sky* as saying, while he worked on the calculations which determined the location of Neptune,

> "We have not found it, but we feel it trembling
> Along the lines of our analysis. . . ."

Meanwhile the religious man lives by the inference which seems to him the most reasonable interpretation of the facts of experience. He can hardly do otherwise. For the faith and the hope associated with this belief are hard to slay, and as far as certainty based on demonstrated fact is concerned, he knows that those who cherish the most somber views have no more of it than he. Thomas Hardy, for instance, is not a cheerful interpreter of life, but in *The Darkling Thrush* he allows us to perceive how even his pessimism is occasionally disturbed by a more inspiring outlook. After describing the forbidding bleakness of a winter's day, he tells us of a thrush which, apparently oblivious to its surroundings, was singing a song "of joy illimited." He concludes:

> So little cause for carolings
> Of such ecstatic sound
> Was written on terrestrial things
> Afar or nigh around,
> That I could think there trembled through
> His happy good-night air,
> Some blessed Hope, whereof he knew
> And I was unaware.

Thus the most wintry views of life are not without their singing thrushes. But for ourselves, if we have to choose between the "life of doubt diversified by faith" and the life of "faith diversified by doubt," on grounds both of reason and of man's biological and moral necessities, we choose the latter.

It does not follow, however, that though we may live a life of "faith diversified by doubt," faith cannot be strengthened. It can be. Belief in immortality will be strengthened by every force in our modern world which inspires respect for human individuality. Whatever tends to reduce man to a uniform standard in all the affairs of the mind, tends to destroy respect for individuality and belief in immortality. For the word "soul" is the spiritual symbol of independent, spontaneous, individual life, freely participating in the value-creating process of the universe. If individuality is crowded out of that process by the standardizing forces of our machine culture, you will ultimately have no belief in the soul. Neither will you have any great art or science. For art and science, even as religion, depend ultimately upon the existence of free human spirits who dare to set themselves against the opinions and practices of their world.

It is in the experience of fellowship, moreover, and especially in the service, at a cost, of that which is beyond and greater than one's self, that the fact of individuality blossoms most readily into faith in immortality. The late Dr. Cornelius Woelfkin tells us of a conversation with a biologist which confirms this truth. They were sitting on a bench at a golf course. Dr. Woelfkin asked the biologist whether anything had been discovered in his science to confirm faith in immortality. He replied in the negative. Then the scientist went on to say: "I have a feeling that until a man espouses either a cause or an individual for which he is perfectly willing to jeopardize life and would count it an honor to die, he does not come in sight of immortality."[12]

Ages of religious experience confirm this insight. Faith in immortality is born of the union of individualities in the comradeship of the struggle for great spiritual values. If these values lie at the heart of the life process and if they reflect its nature, then "the souls of the righteous are in the hands of God and no torment shall touch them." If these values have no such meaning, but are only the luminous effervescence of the blind and purposeless forces of nature, then truly

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[12] Woelfkin, *Expanding Horizons,* p. 269.

> We are here as on a darkling plain,
> Swept with confused alarms of struggle and flight,
> Where ignorant armies clash by night.

In a more philosophic sense, than we have imagined we may find it true that "fellowship is life and lack of fellowship is death."

V

The question, "Can man have fellowship with God in this world of evil?" we have answered in the affirmative—with reservations. These reservations are, that as far as complete logical explanations are concerned, he must not ask for certainty, he must be prepared to live dangerously, to stand for his ideals over against a society which may be hostile and a natural order which may seem indifferent. But men who accept such terms do find God in the midst of evil and the great sufferers most definitely of all.

The answer to our second main question, "May men in such a world as ours work hopefully for the fellowship of their kind?" we can only sketch.[13]

The answer of modern experience to this question as to the former is of a practical character. We are living in a time when a revolution in the technology of transportation and communication has vastly extended our facilities for widespread and mutual understanding. Our success on this continent in achieving neighborliness over such a vast area as that from the Rio Grande to the Arctic Circle encourages us to believe that such areas may be enlarged. We are making distinct progress in perfecting methods of solving group conflict, by arbitration, conciliation, and judicial decision. Science is giving itself more and more to those psychological and sociological studies which should eventuate in building highways of human concord. Business is increasingly conscious of its dependence upon mass prosperity, international peace, and the willing coöperation of all the agents in production. We are beholding the rapid development of a theory of education associated with the name of John Dewey which finds the aim of education to be the interlinking of all genuine and permanent human interests in the ever richer sharing of life by individuals and groups. There is a growing sense of the interdependence of the nations which is expressing itself in international institutions of many varieties.

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[13] Chapter IX deals in more detail with one aspect of this question, the prospects of fellowship as affected by our modern machine culture. Here we only suggest some general considerations to indicate that the outlook upon the cosmic and the human order from the point of view of the faith in fellowship is a unity.

Again, we have the paradoxical result that while modernity has given us a deeper understanding of the stubbornness and gravity of the factors which produce human conflict, it has increased our power of dealing with these factors and of neutralizing their influence in the practical sphere.

The great achievements in the realm of human fellowship, moreover, as in that of fellowship with God, are ultimately the work of men of faith. Those who ask for sure things will be disappointed. Their ships will never leave the dock. Time and tide will never be completely favorable. Discovery and creation in this realm belong only to those who make great assumptions and take great risks.

We had in October of last year (1929) a public exhibition of this truth in the joint statement of Mr. Hoover and Mr. MacDonald upon the occasion of the latter's visit to the United States. In their discussion of the prospects of an agreement upon naval disarmament these two gentlemen declared, "We approach old historical problems from a new angle and in a new atmosphere. On the assumption that war between us is banished and that conflicts between our military or naval forces cannot take place these problems have changed their meaning and character, and their solution in ways satisfactory to both countries has become possible."[14] Again as in the climbing of Mt. Everest everything depends upon the assumption, upon the quality of human faith.

This naval situation is an illustration of how science, art, and faith interblend in the practical achievement of human fellowship. In this matter many technical details were involved—preëminent among which was the development of a yardstick which might be used to measure the relative strength of the navies of Great Britain and the United States. The production of this yardstick was largely the work of the naval experts of the two countries. So far as this yardstick was essential to an agreement, concord between the two countries was an achievement of science.

But a confidence had to be created, an atmosphere of good will had to be generated, which would make it possible for the public of the two countries to concede what the application of the yardstick would require. That confidence and that atmosphere Mr. MacDonald sought to bring into being by a personal

[14] Associated Press Report, October 10, 1929.

visit to the United States, where by the high art of social intercourse he might assure the American people of the sincerity of his own folk.

The impulse to both the technological and the social achievements, the work of science and the work of art, came, however, from another sphere. It came from the faith of these two statesmen that peace was practicable. All statesmen of good will have hated war, but here were two who were willing to base their policies "on the assumption that war between us is banished." According to their faith be it unto them.

There is no other way to human fellowship. Science may furnish facilities for it. Human intercourse may well be developed as the highest of all the arts. But without a lofty vision of the possibilities of shared life and a belief that the vision can be actualized men will lack the incentive and the courage to use the facilities of science and the practices of art. The way of fellowship will remain to the end a way of faith, but the experiences of our time confirm the answer of religion to our inquiry, that we may walk that way with hope.

Whether men shall come to look upon their lives in terms of a cosmic demand, and also in terms of a cosmic concern for their good, is no less a matter than the ultimate life or death of human society.

—Hocking in *Religion and Modern Life*, p. 370.

Chapter Eight

I BELIEVE

I

The faith implicit in this book is, we trust, now beginning to take form.

I believe that the modern intellectual outlook with its emphasis upon the validation of religious truth in this world of space and time, upon man's continuity with nature, upon the organic interrelatedness of all things, and upon the sacredness of the spirit of inquiry, is not necessarily hostile, but rather congenial to the development of the moral and spiritual life of our race.

I believe that the persistent intuitions of Christianity, with its sense of dependence upon a Divine Life which is accessible to every man, a Life to which man's moral struggle is significant—I believe that these intuitions are not incompatible with the most important elements of our modern outlook.

I believe that early Christianity embodied so fully the characteristics of vital religion that those of us who have been reared in the Christian tradition need not look elsewhere for the criteria of an adequate faith.

I believe that religion is a valid and essential interest of man; that science in all its phases is complementary to religion but no substitute for it; and that the greatness of the achievement of our generation depends upon our continued ability to appropriate the vision of life's meaning, the sense of direction, the incentives and the energies which it is the function of religion to make available.

I believe that the central faith of religion, the belief in God—the order of universal being interpreted in the light of its highest possibilities, the cosmic source of our ideals and the cosmic response to our deepest inner personal needs—I believe that this central faith is both the logical and the practical consequence of our belief in life itself and that it constitutes the only durable basis upon which we may bring our lives to their fulfillment.

I believe that the personality and career of Jesus Christ and the moral and spiritual experience of the race which has flowed from him represent the most unmistakable movement of God in human history, a movement inspired by the divine purpose to make known to men His character and to endow men with

His energies for the realization among them of a divine order of life.

I believe that the most significant point of contact for our generation with the historical Christian movement will be found in the endeavor to verify the insights of Jesus into the processes of moral and spiritual growth.

I believe that supreme among his insights was the conviction that life with God and with men was capable of being organized upon the basis of love, of mutual sharing, of fellowship.

I believe that the effort to realize the possibilities of this life of fellowship, human and divine, is not rendered unreasonable by the facts of the cosmic or human order, although there are facts in both realms which do not accord with any logical synthesis which we can construct.

I believe that the endeavor to achieve a larger unity of mankind, making available to all the fruits of personal and group experience in every realm and especially in the realm of religion, to the end that individuality may be protected and heightened and fellowship enriched, marks the main line of advance for the Christian spirit in our time.

I believe that as we follow this line of advance we shall make theological discoveries as well as those which are psychological and sociological, and that fellowship, the struggle with its enemies and the endurance of its tragedies, will prove the practical road to a deeper life with God and to a new age of faith.

II

Such is the religious outlook to which we have come. What we have just presented we are aware is neither a "high" philosophy nor a theology of the Christian religion. The writer's answers to his own questions seem to him to be inadequate, and some of the deepest questions have not even been asked. We trust, however, that there is embodied in this statement of faith a point of view and a sense of direction for further inquiry.

Further inquiry along the lines we have been following we believe to be essential if Christianity is to find its way in the modern world as a growing faith, between a static orthodoxy, on the one hand, and the cults which represent the religious wistfulness of secularism on the other. The most significant cleavage in American religious thought right now is the cleavage between Christianity in all its forms and the various religious embodiments of scientific naturalism. The most pretentious movement of the latter character is known as humanism.

It may serve to distinguish the point of view from which we have written more precisely if, having made a positive statement of faith, we now briefly set down why humanism does not seem to us to offer a promising way forward.

There is strength in humanism for which we would ask the fullest recognition. Its strength lies in its emphasis upon the mood of experiment in the moral and spiritual world, upon the importance of the open-eyed search for truth in every realm. It lies again in its refusal to postpone the battle with evil because of acquiescence in the ways of an inscrutable Providence which doeth all things well. Its strength lies still further in its determination to test religious truth by the human values which that truth helps to realize. In these respects we are for humanism. We feel that the impulses of human nature which are finding expression in these attitudes are of permanent value for the achievement of man's spiritual destiny.

But humanism also has its weaknesses. Its break with the continuity of religious history is complete. The great tradition which centers in the immemorial quest of the race for God is liquidated by the humanist as an almost total loss. God is to be forgotten and the quest abandoned. For a religion, moreover, humanism is over-intellectualized. It is distilled from books rather than from the experience of plain people. It ignores those elements of religion which cannot be incased in a syllogism.

Still other practical weaknesses of humanism are to be found in the illogical and unstable attitude of its adherents toward the cosmos and in the psychic malaise which its subtle egocentric temper is likely to produce. Concerning these weaknesses we should like to say something further.

The illogical and unstable attitude of humanists toward the cosmos may be illustrated by the following words of Justice Holmes which Professor Dewey quotes with approval in the latter's *Experience and Nature*: "That the universe has in it more than we understand, that the private soldiers have not been told the plan of campaign, or even that there is one . . . has no bearing on our conduct. We still shall fight—all of us because we want to live, some, at least, because we want to realize our spontaneity and prove our powers, for the joy of it, and we may leave to the unknown the supposed final valuation of that which in any event has value to us."[1]

This is a condensed statement, but it seems a fair summary of the humanistic point of view. Would it pass as a recipe for maintaining the morale of an army? Hardly. At least, not according to General

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[1] Dewey, *Experience and Nature,* Chicago, 1925, p. 419.

Foch, one of whose military maxims was that "every soldier must see his General—must feel himself in connection with him, and never be allowed to consider himself merely a poor pawn maneuvered by an unknown power." Do armies, after all, fight well which know nothing of the purpose of the war or even that there is any plan of campaign, which are urged just to fight for the fun of fighting, "to realize our spontaneity and prove our powers"? Merely to ask such a question brings this military illustration of humanistic philosophy out of the clouds of speculation down to the world of real fact. What kind of soldiers do fight best? Go to the Battle Abbey in Richmond, Virginia, and gaze upon some of those marvelous paintings of the Confederate armies. Look upon the faces of those ragged followers of Stonewall Jackson, for instance, (Jackson's "foot cavalry," they were called), the men who made incredible marches and won impossible victories, who were constantly doing things whose meaning they did not fully understand, but who had unlimited confidence in "Old Jack." Tell those men, if you will, that it made no difference to them who was their commander or whether he had any plan of campaign.

Such a position seems in our humble opinion to contradict the entire critical movement of thought to which Professor Dewey has made such an extraordinary contribution. The spirit of that movement and of its various manifestations in the field of education, of patriotism, and of religion seems to be embodied in Professor Hocking's declaration, "We are right in wishing to see first and be loyal afterward."[2] And over against Holmes, who asks us to fight for the joy of it, regardless of the purposes of our world which our fighting serves, we put Hocking, who tells us: "We have the right to see first and be loyal afterward only because, unless we see, we cannot be loyal, nor in any sense sincere or moral. No determination to be a lover of life, no resolve to fight down desire, or grief, or regret, or aversion, no attempt to transform one's own nature, can succeed by dint of the effortful will alone."[3]

Is there not a logical contradiction at the heart of humanism which asks us to be so critical about all our human values and so indifferent to the trend of the cosmic whole of which our humanity is but a part? Is it any wonder that the humanists themselves find it impossible to maintain such an unstable position and that some of them, in reaching out for logical consistency, lose their balance and fall off with

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[2] Hocking, *The Meaning of God in Human Experience*, p. 436.
[3] *Ibid.*, p. 437.

Bertrand Russell and Joseph Wood Krutch on the side of cosmic pessimism, while others fall off, with Justice Holmes, on the side of cosmic optimism, saying as he does, "We have the Infinite behind us," and hearing with him "the chord of a harmony that breathes from the unknown." [4]

And does not Justice Holmes' statement, which throws all the responsibility for this unintelligible war of existence upon the private soldier who fights to live and to prove his powers—does not this statement reveal the introvert temper which naturalistic humanism is inclined to produce? No wonder Bertrand Russell asks us to give up the ideal of contemplation and that Professor Harry Elmer Barnes calls upon us to extravert our minds. Then Clarence Darrow tells us how on these terms he has been able to make a "go" of life. By keeping incessantly busy with dreams which "will never come to pass," and in working out his "strongest emotions," he has been able to "forget the machinery of existence" and to keep from turning toward that Medusa's head which freezes those who see it to stone—the question of the nature and worth of life itself. "I have lived in these dreams and emotions. I have lived in them so strongly that I have been practically unconscious of life. And the fact that I have measurably succeeded by this means in negating life itself has made existence tolerable and on the whole worth while."[5]

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[4] Dewey, *Experience and Nature,* p. 419.

What is the matter with these men? Why have they fled from the inner chambers of the soul? They have fled because those chambers are haunted by the ghost of a spiritual world which has died.

Could any evidence be more complete of the subtle introversion which the humanistic philosophy induces, an introversion from which Russell, Barnes, and Darrow, each in his own way, clamors to escape. And the absorption of the intelligentsia in personal "adjustments" of every conceivable variety; their feeling that almost every relationship of life is chaotic and more or less impossible; their endeavor to master all wisdom by the effortful will alone (for they cannot trust any of the deeper forces of life)—an endeavor in which Hocking finds the source of spiritual fatigue and sterility; and their preference for the luxury of asking new questions which will excuse them from the hard practical effort of answering any questions whether old or new, all betray the secret malady of humanism. It is a preoccupation with self, and with the question, How can the self be happy, in a cosmos from which it springs and into which all great issues lead, but which the self, by the use of philosophic blinders, seeks to ignore.

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[5] Darrow, "Why I Have Found Life Worth Living," in *The Christian Century*, April 19, 1928.

Does not such an attitude, with the pose of indifference to ultimate issues which it must needs cultivate, involve indeed a new artificiality of life—a new bondage of the human spirit?

It is only those who have some faith in the responsiveness of the cosmos to their deepest longings and in the support which the cosmos gives them at their best, who can really extravert their minds in a reasonable way. They are not seeking to negate life, but to explore and share it. They can really forget and lose themselves because they live in a moral order which will not forget or lose them. They can really give themselves with completeness of concern to their part as players in the great game, because the game itself has goals which are of lasting worth.

It is because of its inadequacy both as a philosophy and as a regimen for psychic health that naturalistic humanism in its various historic forms has always tended to disintegrate. It has value today as a critical force stimulating the development of Christianity. It probably has still greater value as a revelation of the spiritual drift of the secular culture of our time.

But for ourselves, a Christianity in which the experimental mood has become acclimated, a Christianity which seeks to utilize all the resources of nature and man in the realization of its ideal of fellowship—such a Christianity represents a far more hopeful venture of the human spirit toward a faith that is capable of furnishing a channel for the spiritual energies of contemporary civilization than does humanism.

Is our civilization, however, congenial on its part to such a faith as we see emerging in Christianity? The last of the pivotal questions which we raised at the beginning of this book is now before us.

You cannot at once preach the religion of Christianity and practice the religion of material success, which is the creed of a great part of the Western World and is the true competitor of Christianity for the allegiance of mankind.

. . . the naïve illusion that a society becomes more prosperous if its output of commodities increases, while the institutions which provide its moral stamina are undermined, will deceive no one who accepts the Christian view that material wealth is to be valued in so far as, and only in so far as, it assists and enriches the life of the spirit.

—R. H. Tawney at the Jerusalem Conference as reported by Basil Mathews in *Roads to the City of God*, pp. 77-78.

Chapter Nine

CAN CHRISTIANITY ENDURE OUR MACHINE CULTURE?

We cannot answer such a question as this by a chapter in a book. It will not be answered by any number of books. It will only be answered by the course of human existence over a fairly long period. What we may do here and perhaps profitably is to survey some of the facts which occasion the asking of this question, and note some of the tendencies which seem to be pushing us toward one answer or another.

That this mechanized culture of ours creates problems for religion is the refrain of much of our current literature. John Herman Randall, Jr., in *Our Changing Civilization*, and Reinhold Niebuhr in his book, *Does Civilization Need Religion?*, both affirm that the challenge of our modern manner of life with its urban environment, its dominant commercial motives, and its technical devices is more serious for religion than the intellectual changes which have undermined the structure of orthodoxy.

Every working pastor is conscious of the strain upon himself and his institution involved in the effort to make headway in the new time. The decline in Sunday-evening services, in evangelistic meetings and revivals, in the practices of personal and family piety, the increasing use of Sunday as a holiday, the shortening of the church year, the dispersal of interests once concentrated in the church over a wide variety of clubs and community enterprises, the contentment of many people with radio preaching as a substitute for personal participation in public worship, together with the development by the churches of promotion schemes, publicity, and activities galore so that their actual gospel seems at times a combination of grace, jazz, and salesmanship—all are indications of the strain of adjustment. The reaction in Russia and China against a Christianity which in the minds of the new leaders of these countries is identified with capitalism is so profound that we cannot even imagine what its consequences will be. This reaction is already beginning to have reverberations in this country, increasing our uncertainty as to what is permanent and vital in religion. The problem of the congeniality of Christianity and various powerful trends in modern civilization is being taken ever more seriously.

I

In order to see that problem in its dominant aspects let us suggest in quite a summary fashion important characteristics both of Christianity and of our machine culture.

The particular quality of Christianity which has gotten hold of us is obviously that which is embodied in a faith in the possibility of organizing human life in terms of fellowship. This faith derives its primary historic significance from the experience of Jesus and his followers. It is rooted sociologically, however, in the stable face-to-face relationships which we find in the family and the neighborhood, relationships so influential in the determination of character that they have been called by social scientists the human-nature-making relationships. They are the human-nature-making relationships because they involve an experience of permanent intimacy in which we become concrete individual persons with wholeness of life, and valued by others for our uniqueness. Here our aspirations have their rise and our ideals take shape. Here the traditions of group and race are handed down. Here the first unconscious adjustments to these traditions are made. Here most of the urges of our social natures are expressed and satisfied.

The kind of Christianity in which we believe is at bottom a faith in the dignity and the significance of the personal life which in a large measure is fashioned by these experiences. Our capacity for sharing deeply the personal lives of others is of course limited. We have a multiplicity of relations with other human beings where the limitations of our natures compel us to control rigidly the area of contact. When this area becomes relatively minute so that the individual practically ceases to be thought of as a concrete personal whole, but rather as a thing marked for the purpose at hand by a single characteristic, we speak of the relationship as being impersonal. But it is the faith of Christianity that each of these impersonal relationships could be upon occasion filled out into a relationship between concrete and worthful individuals, and the Christian ethical philosophy grows from the root idea that all of the impersonal relationships of life should be informed by the imaginative consciousness that these contacts are contacts between full persons and that they should serve to enhance and fulfill the lives of complete individual personalities.

The conflict between modern preachers of what is called the "social gospel" and leaders of industry, for instance, has pivoted largely on this point. Religious leaders have contended that the impersonal relations of industry, particularly the relations between the owners and the workers, must be tested by their contribution to a fuller personal life for all concerned, while owners and managers have pointed out that the relations in controversy are parts of a business which is tested by the impersonal standard of financial profit, and that these relations cannot be changed without peril to the whole structure. There are leaders of business, like Mr. John D. Rockefeller, Jr., who realize that a real and difficult issue is here involved. But the majority of such leaders apparently consider the interest of the Church in economic questions as only meddlesome.

The tension which has developed on various occasions between the leaders of religion and the leaders of business (as in the case of the Report of the Interchurch World Movement on the steel strike of 1919) illustrates the lack of adjustment between a Christianity which places supreme value upon the fellowship of persons and a civilization which is a network of impersonal processes. What are the organizing forces of this civilization? A biological parable may perhaps suggest them.

II

Professor C. M. Child of the University of Chicago has told us of experiments which he has performed upon the simpler animals. Some of these animals he has cut up into various pieces, which pieces have then proceeded to develop into separate individuals. Where this occurs he says that the head of the new individual develops in that particular region of the animal fragment where there is the greatest physiological activity. This active region then proceeds to organize the more inactive portions of the fragment in relation to itself. He notes further that the dominant position of this region is largely the result of its becoming sufficiently active to be relatively independent of the other parts.[1]

What do these experiments suggest? They suggest that leadership in the organic world tends to be correlated with areas of activity and change, that the active region of an organism tends to subordinate the more static areas, and that the area of activity and dominance seeks release from the restraining pressure of other areas.

These principles may not have the significance for the sociological world which Professor Child thinks they have[2] but they may serve to indicate some of the characteristic elements in the growth of our machine civilization. One of the characteristic features of that civilization is the leadership of the business class. The development of the traders and merchants

[1] Child in the symposium, *The Child, the Clinic and the Court, New Republic* series, pp. 146-147.

[2] Child, *Physiological Foundations of Behavior,* chaps. xvi, xvii.

of the Middle Ages, who were relatively subordinate to the military landed aristocracy and the ecclesiastical hierarchy, to a position where as business men they dominate the modern world is the motif of the social history of the last five hundred years in western Europe and America.

The rise of the business class to power was aided by influences which reduced the prestige of other important classes. In England, for instance, where the commercial revolution of the sixteenth and seventeenth and the industrial revolution of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries produced their earliest effects, the position of the nobility had been weakened by developments in the art of war (the use of the long-bow, gunpowder, and cannon), by the effects upon their numbers and influence of the Hundred Years War and the War of the Roses, by the distribution of political power to commoners in Parliament, and by the growing reliance of the Crown directly upon the people. The Protestant Reformation resulted not only in the confiscation of the monasteries and the consequent loss of great financial resources by the religious institution, but also in the permanent division of the people into varying religious groups. Meanwhile the New World was opened to trade and colonization, navigation developed apace, the instruments of banking and finance were greatly improved, the joint-stock method of organization, opening the way to the chartered company and the corporation, greatly increased the concentrated power of commercial groups, and capital became ever more important in business.

When the achievements associated with such names as Newton, Franklin, Galvani and Volta, Boyle, Priestley, Lavoisier, and Cavendish laid the foundations for the sciences of physics and chemistry and made possible a systematic intellectual attack upon the problem of exploiting the resources of nature for human benefit, it was the trading and merchant class of England which found itself in a position to profit by the ensuing changes more than any other. It was the same class that had benefited most largely through the exploration and development of new countries. It was prevailingly Protestant in its religious sympathies and relatively unhampered by Catholic traditions concerning the ethics of trade and money-lending. The Calvinistic temper, as Weber and Tawney have shown, was particularly favorable to business efficiency and the production of wealth. The developments in the sciences of physics and chemistry, moreover, occurred in a realm where supernatural taboos and social prejudices were of least effect in limiting freedom of thought. These sciences had to do with the manipulation and transformation of "things," not with minds or souls or the relations of persons. Scientific intelligence, accordingly, found itself able to explore most freely in a realm where the results of its discoveries could be turned most quickly by the use of capital and business organization into profits. Thus the most active region of modern civilization, the region where the most changes occurred of immediate and practical benefit to man became the economic-technological area. And the business class, having the capital, and the use of the instrumentalities of science in its most unhampered area, naturally sought to free itself from all restraints of either governmental or ecclesiastical nature which would keep it from realizing the full benefits of its strategic position according to its traditional standards of success.

It is in America that the business class has achieved its most complete dominance and given its tone to an entire civilization. Here it has not been limited, as in Europe, by the rivalry of an hereditary aristocracy, a state church or a military caste. Here a great continent has been open to its exploitation, offering incomparable material prizes to the successful. And here the long influence of an advancing frontier of settlement has created a spirit of personal independence, an emphasis upon freedom of initiative in economic affairs, and a resentment at governmental restraint which business propagandists have used to great advantage in preventing adequate public control of their undertakings. The penetration of business ideals, practices, and habits of thought throughout the whole of our American culture is also evident. Amusements, education, the professions, the cultivation of the arts, the activities and aims of the Church, all reveal the influence of a powerful central magnet at the heart of our civilization tending to draw our desires, interests, and institutions into the lines of its field of force.

Professor Child's biological experiments may not explain sociological phenomena—the dominance of the business class, its endeavor to secure unhampered freedom of action, its penetration of other areas of life—but they may serve as a parable to throw into relief some of the outstanding features of this civilization of ours whose symbol, the machine, is the offspring of the momentous union of business and science.

III

Now what kind of a civilization is this in which the business class is dominant as in America?

It is a civilization in which various elements of the trading tradition are increasingly influential. One of those elements is the assumption of a certain impersonality in human relations.

Whether trade carries with it a wariness and an advantage-taking psychology, which comes down from primitive bartering between tribes and villages, as Sir Henry Maine suggests, we do not know, but his views are worthy of attention. Among primitive peoples, he says, the markets were set up on neutral ground between village communities, which were themselves for the most part associations of kindred. These markets "were probably the only places at which the members of the primitive groups met for any purpose except warfare." Is it to be wondered that a sense of estranged interests and of latent hostility characterized the market which took form in "the idea of sharp practice and hard bargaining"? "What is the real origin," says Sir Henry Maine, "of the feeling that it is not creditable to drive a hard bargain with a near relative or friend? It can hardly be that there is any rule of morality to forbid it. The feeling seems to me to bear the traces of the old notion that men united in natural groups do not deal with one another on principles of trade. . . . Gradually the assumption of the right to get the best price has penetrated into the interior of these groups, but it is never completely received as long as the bond of connection between man and man is assumed to be that of family or clan connection."[3]

We cite this reference from Sir Henry Maine to indicate that the trading tradition probably has behind it an age-long experience of casual contacts between strangers, and that the impersonal relationship involved has always been recognized as difficult to harmonize with the organization of human relations on the family basis.

Now when the business of the trader or the merchant was confined to a small locality where he himself was a citizen and where all his practices were under the scrutiny of those with whom he was associated in permanent and stable relations, this impersonal aspect of business was reduced to a minimum. But with the specialization and the widening market incident to the development of the machine and with the growth of the corporate organization of business which removed the actual owners further from the workers and the consumers, the impersonal aspect of business has developed steadily.

Business now presents to society the tremendous problem of providing such imaginative supervision of its myriad of impersonal contacts between workers, owners, and consumers as may render these contacts most beneficial to society as a whole, a supervision which in the smaller communities of an agricultural era had been provided consciously and unconsciously in the intimate relations of the business man to his fellows of all classes. It is this need of a larger collective vision of the results of business under the conditions of the machine age which has been responsible for the growth of governmental agencies for the control of business—*e.g.*, the Interstate Commerce Commission, the Federal Trade Commission, the Public Service Commissions, etc.; for the development of corporation law; and for the organization of trade associations among business men themselves for the maintenance of certain standards of conduct. And it is the consciousness of the inequalities, the injustices, and inhumanities connected with the workings of this impersonal business structure which has inspired the moral protest at the heart of various radical movements.

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[3] Maine, *Village Communities in the East and West,* pp. 192-197.

Another element in the trading tradition which is having a profound effect on modern life is the measurement of success in terms of things, of financial profit. The cash nexus is the only bond between the strangers who meet in the casual contacts of trade, and the motive is the motive of acquisition. Now this was not the primary motive with either the mediæval Church or the mediæval aristocracy. Both of these groups sought power over human life. The Church found power in its monopoly of access to the supernatural; the aristocracy in its castles and armies of retainers. It is with the dominance of the trading class that the possession of wealth has come to be the main pathway to large power in Western civilization. The business standard of success is, accordingly, being applied more and more in other realms than trade, artists, novelists, preachers, physicians, and editors being accorded deference according to their incomes or to the revenues which they bring into the institution with which they are connected.

A philosophic apologetic proceeds *pari passu* with the practical realization of this order of things. "Generally, with some exceptions," says Professor Carver of Harvard, "the more useful the person is the more he is paid," a doctrine which "establishes indubitably that the owner of a cigar-store chain is infinitely more valuable to humanity than a Keats, even though from every past civilization the only things which remain of value to humanity are the creative work of those who were not business men." [4]

It is the union of these business traditions with science, however, which has produced some of the more striking features of our present civilization. From that union have come the constantly increasing specialization and complexity which characterize the fabrication of goods, so that the workmen's contribution is more and more narrow in its scope and mechanical in its accomplishment. Such workmen find it ever more difficult to have any conception of the whole process in which they are engaged or to regard their share in the process as interesting in itself.

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[4] From James Truslow Adams' article "A Business Man's Civilization" in *Harpers Magazine*, July, 1929.

cf. Marshall

From this union, moreover, is derived the production of standardized goods in quantities, and inasmuch as it is in the production of such goods that the largest profits are made, we are experiencing powerful pressure toward uniformity in all our habits of life which have to do with material things.

This standardization process is beginning to display some sinister aspects. It is possible to defend the employment of workmen in purely uniform mechanical operations on the ground that in the use of his enlarged leisure he will be able to recover his individuality. Foreign critics, of course, like André Siegfried, challenge this assumption. "Can it be possible," says Siegfried, "that the personality of the individual can recover itself in consumption after being so crippled and weakened in production?" "This change in the center of gravity in the life of the individual marks an absolute revolution in the ideas on which society in western Europe has been built up."[5]

But when, under the lure of profit, we find the uniformities of standardization spread over all the activities of our leisure time, over reading, entertainment, and the news, over the exercise of taste in art, education, and recreation, we ourselves begin to question the results even though the possibility of making up by the creative use of leisure for the gulf which the machine creates between work and interest be admitted.

And along with the domination of our civilization by business, with its traditions of impersonality and the supremacy of the profit objective, with its tool, the machine, and its processes of specialization and standardization, have come two by-products, the one material, the other psychological. The one is the big city, the vast population, drawn together, to work the machines and to exchange their products—a form of human association in which anonymity is at its maximum. The other is a kind of optimistic *laissez-faire* determinism which controls the thinking of the majority of business men, which makes it unnecessary for them to ask what their impersonal processes are doing to personalities or to society as a whole. A relatively immediate profit has been for so long their goal, and by devotion to it they have prospered so mightily in a material way that it is difficult for them to see beyond it or to set it aside as a standard of action. The socially unplanned cities which they build breed crime and destroy the home. The skyscrapers mount ever higher in New York and the congestion is ever greater. Meanwhile we have the anomalous situation that the poor college professor who has kind words to say for the educational program of the Soviet government may be thrown out of his position by the business men who are the trustees of his institution, at the very moment that the Soviet government itself is being sustained and strengthened by the expenditures and credits of General Electric, International Harvester, the Ford Motor Company, U. S. Steel, and the oil companies which are in Russia in search of a profit.[6]

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[5] Siegfried, *America Comes of Age*, p. 349.

Here is the reason why so many intellectuals are interested in socialism of one kind or another. They regard the theory, that whatever leads to financial profit must be inevitably "good" for society, as one of the most crude and dangerous obsessions by which the human mind has ever been afflicted. They know that the age in which we live calls for coöperative planning on the very largest scale, planning in which private profit must be clearly subordinate to the provision by society of such essentials of human living as space in which to live and play, health at work and in the home, continuous employment, a wage which makes possible marriage and the rearing of a family, adequate protection against sickness and old age, and freedom of thought and opinion. They know that in such planning all classes of the population must participate. The problem which capitalistic society faces is the problem of securing such large-scale coöperative planning without overloading the functions of the civil government. A capitalism which sees this problem and tackles it will be indeed an enlightened capitalism. And the measures which are going forward to this end under both public and private auspices seem to those like the writer, who do not believe that "profit" can be entirely eliminated from business, and who fear the overloading of the functions and institutions of government, among the most promising trends in contemporary civilization.

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[6] Suggested by Dean Paul Monroe's article, "Problem of Educating Soviet Masses," in *Current History*, October, 1929.

IV

And now where are the points of tension between this machine culture and Christianity? Let us see once more if we cannot learn something from the foreign students of our American civilization. One of the most distinguished of these, M. Lucien Romier, finds our civilization threatened from within by three perils.[7]

First there is the peril of losing the spirit of the disinterested search for truth. He finds that everywhere business is greatly concerned for scientific developments that promise immediate practical returns in financial profit, but that it is only slightly interested in theoretical science. He might have added that the slow development of the social sciences is at least partially due to the fear on the part of business that research in these fields might lead to disconcerting facts and conclusions. In other words, the "profit" motive tends to destroy that spirit of disinterested devotion to ideals apart from material gain which has been the secret of human progress in science and art as well as religion.

The second peril of our machine culture, according to M. Romier, is that of the disintegration of the family. Here again it seems to us that he could find plenty of material to support his view of the tendencies at work. There can be no question that our urbanized industrial civilization subjects the family to centrifugal forces where agriculture made the family group more compact. As the labor system of agriculture was built on the family as the unit, the labor system of industry is built on the individual. A family is an expensive luxury to the industrial worker. The apartment-house owner views the family man with unconcealed hostility. The wage scale takes no account of his domestic responsibilities.

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[7] Romier, *Qui sera le Maître Europe ou Amérique?*

Statistics of the gainfully employed in America, England, and Australia reveal that over one-quarter of the adult males so employed are bachelors, one-quarter are married but have no children, approximately thirty per cent have one or two children, while upon twenty per cent of these adult males rests the burden of rearing and educating the majority of those who will constitute the next generation. In France, where there is a keen public interest in maintaining the birth rate, there are over two hundred funds representing more than 14,000 employers and 1,400,000 wage-earners which provide allowances supplementing the basic wage rate in proportion to the number of children dependent upon the workman.[8] American business may occasionally take into account family obligations in hiring and discharging employees, but it has never faced seriously the disintegrating effects of our industrial system upon the home.

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[8] Douglas, Paul H., in *The Family*, vol. viii, p. 288 f.

The fact that industry pivots upon the individual instead of upon the family, the mobility of labor, the increasing substitution of machinery operated by only slightly trained workmen for craftsmanship, the anonymity of the great city and its destruction of neighborhood spirit and organization, and the renter status which characterizes the great majority of urban dwellers, all tend to create a landless, toolless class without roots in stable and intimate personal relations. The laborer in megalopolis, accordingly, is quite likely to be of a very different human type from either the American farmer or the mediæval guildsman.

Possible social consequences of these developments have been pointed out by Dean Roscoe Pound of the Harvard Law School.

> Some studies made during the war [he says] indicate that the moral implications of an increasingly migratory laboring population call for serious consideration. Our institutions presuppose a stable home-owning tax-paying population of which each individual has and feels a personal interest in its legal and political institutions and bears his share in the conduct of them. Irregularity and discontinuity of employment and consequently migration from city to city, or back and forth between city and country preclude the sort of society for which our institutions were shaped.[9]

[9] Quoted by the Lynds in *Middletown*, p. 61.

Exactly. And we shall probably find out in America that prosperity, the law and the police all combined are a poor substitute as a guarantee of public order for the home and the church to whose impairment by the blind surge of profit-seeking forces we have as yet given little intelligent concern.

M. Romier's final word to America is a warning against trying to build a civilization simply on the cash nexus. Such a civilization will lack that experience of wholeness, that richly varied unity which has been the meaning of humanism in its larger sense. The charm, the courtesy, the friendships of life which depend upon relations between complete persons who live in the full range of man's interests will disappear. Our critic doubts the ability of a purely economic culture to withstand the shocks to its internal cohesion which the future will certainly bring. An egotism which in its struggle for material gain has become indifferent to man's entire cultural achievement in the past as well as heedless of the family will not find the bonds of national unity a curb to its anarchic desires.

We have cited these views of M. Romier because Christianity finds it difficult to adjust itself to our machine culture at the very points where our foreign critic finds our civilization in peril.

There is a contradiction between the subordination of all other values to the profit motive and the attitude of disinterested devotion to the Best for its own sake which is at the very heart of Christian worship.

There is a contradiction between the egocentric manner of living characteristic of our overgrown impersonal industrialized urban communities and the attitudes and ideals of human fellowship which are generated in stable and intimate personal relationships.

There is a contradiction between the specialisms and standardized uniformities of both production and consumption into which human beings are pressed by the organization of society to make more things at a profit and that craving for both completeness and individuality of life which has given to personal existence the consciousness of dignity.

V

What does the future hold for organized Christianity as it faces these contradictions?

It is possible that the centrifugal forces which are dispersing the interests of men from both home and church will be completely triumphant. One can imagine an era of prosperous secularism in which one listens occasionally to a clergyman who is on the staff of a broadcasting company, prays when he feels like it in one of the chapels which all of the hotels, following the example of the Biltmore, shall have provided, consults a psychiatrist for his depressions, takes a little piety along with golf and the mountain air as at the Lake Placid Club, and employs the psychologists who are beginning to swarm over business to invent a religion which will equip him with the maximum of fitness for the economic struggle.

Such an invented secular religion it is perfectly evident will be composed of two elements, "escape" and "pep." It will soothe us and enable us to forget life's irritations, turn our thoughts away from ugliness and injustice, and fill us with righteous zeal to win the game as it is played. If we need an old-fashioned devil to sublimate our combative impulses we can find him in the reformers and uplifters who are trying to change the rules to make the game more fair, and who deny that we are living in the best of all possible worlds.

As the psychologists proceed with their questionnaires and try out their cardiographic apparatus to discover under what ecclesiastical circumstances we now get the maximum emotional thrill, it will become apparent that our existing religion, in spite of its efforts to adapt itself to the demands of successful living in our culture, is still a very inefficient affair.

It is all cluttered up with Old Testament prophecies with their moral judgments on prosperous nations which ought never to appear in a religious service except in the anthems. It talks about the strong bearing the burdens of the weak in a world where the biologists tell us the weak have always born the burdens of the strong. It has foolish ideas about life being more than the packing industry and the body more than the clothing trade. Christianity "as is," although partially denatured by many "adaptations" to our existing culture, is still somewhat dangerous as an elixir of profit. But it can be improved, and a careful fact-finding survey of existing religious experiences which are "quieting" and also "inspiring" for the purposes of our secular society, a survey utilizing the best behavioristic technique, may possibly turn the trick.

But it is also conceivable that Christianity may resist these denaturing tendencies and may elect to pursue a way more self-respecting and more congenial to its historic tradition. Under these circumstances we are told that Protestantism will disappear, being too fully exposed to the assaults of secularism, while Catholicism sheltered within its fortress of unchangeable dogma will strengthen itself by every institutional device and perhaps constitute the last stand of organized Christianity in the modern world.

The area now occupied by Protestantism will be gradually preëmpted by clubs and cults of every variety, embodying for the most part the "escape" and "pep" elements which are so appreciated by the harassed men and women of the machine age.

For my own part, I do not believe that Protestantism is in any immediate danger of dissolution. Under the urge of specialization, the dispersal of interests which have hitherto centered in its churches may continue, Catholicism may grow, the cults may multiply. But there will still remain many people in our society, and they will not be the least thoughtful or worthy who will continue to desire in their religion those elements which they have found in Protestantism, and before they take up with any newly invented religion they will scrutinize it quite carefully to discern whether, with all its modern conveniences, it will give them the religious satisfactions which Protestantism has aimed to supply.

Protestantism, for instance, has aimed definitely to combine the experience of sharing in a historic, collective faith with the experience of the widest freedom for individual growth in matters of religious appreciation. This faith and this freedom it holds by necessity in an equilibrium which is unstable. Where Protestantism is true to its genius, faith can never become static dogma nor freedom a mere disruptive ferment. To maintain the balance between faith and freedom, to test faith by the freedom it inspires, and freedom by the faith it achieves, has always been the problem of the Protestant. He never succeeds completely in solving it. All of the sectarian divisions within Protestantism come from the effort to hold on to these two essentials. But the very struggle involved in the effort to keep these two great spiritual values from being separated also prevents either of them from being obscured or lost.

Protestantism has also aimed at a type of religion which challenges the activities of the mind and the conscience as Latin Christianity has appealed to the senses and the feelings. Protestantism cannot be indifferent to any revelation of either truth or righteousness, no matter what its source, and maintain its integrity. No walls shut it off from either the laboratories of science or the moral conflicts of the industrial and political arena. By its very nature it must be self-critical.

I wonder if in all the world there is any institution with such vested interests, material and spiritual, which tolerates such public criticism of its faith, organization, and methods on the part of its paid servants as does the Protestant Church. In this respect Catholicism with all its merits cannot compare with it. As for the religion of "business," there are times when you cannot even breathe without some one saying "you are hurting business." How about the critical spirit in the religion of "nationalism"? If the decisions of the courts in respect to the applications for citizenship of Professor Douglas Macintosh and Rosika Schwimmer are any guide, Jesus Christ himself could not become a citizen of this country today unless he would promise to jump into a uniform, shoulder a rifle, and kill his man any time a majority of Congressmen told him to do so. His "not to reason why," his "but to do and die." Nationalism does not tolerate dissent.

Pilloried in the press, which always selects a Protestant clergyman as the subject for caricature, never a priest, so accustomed to attack that the squeamishness of Christian Scientists over Dakin's life of Mrs. Eddy seems hardly believable, described by facile writers as the happy hunting-ground for heretics, the prospecting area where the Elmer Gantrys mine for gold, Protestantism may be conservative, schismatic, and inefficient, but if the ability to stand criticism is any test, it is not sick. The magazine reports of its death, as Mark Twain would say, are greatly exaggerated.

Participation in a faith which unites one to all the past, freedom for religious exploration which looks to all the future, an experience of the appeal of religion to the mind and the conscience as well as to the subtler cravings, these are some of the spiritual values which Christians of the Protestant type have found to an appreciable degree in their churches. And they have found these values embodied in a local religious fellowship which has cemented families together in the stable bonds of an endearing intimacy. The vital Protestant Church has always been a fellowship of families. If Protestantism is to be displaced it will have to be by some form of religion which conserves the spiritual values for which it has striven in an intimate atmosphere like that which it has provided. Such a religion, even with all our laboratories working on the problem, it will not be easy to invent.

As for the continuance of Protestantism, it certainly depends, as far as the factors we are considering in this chapter are concerned, upon the continuance and stability of the compact family group. The future of the family in turn depends to some degree upon our ability by the science of social engineering to decentralize our great urban areas and distribute their activities to smaller communities.

Even if the family is maintained, however, and a stable self-respecting community life with a less congested population is supported by our economic forces, it is probable that the dispersive influences of the machine age will separate from the Protestant churches that large fringe of persons who are nominally connected with them now simply as a matter of custom or social respectability. With this decline in membership, Protestantism itself may not be weakened in any vital way. The churches, for instance, will be able to close down some of the activities which have been designed to hold the interest of the lukewarm and which have been operated at a spiritual loss. In fact, numerical losses may make possible consolidations and mergers, the cutting of overhead and provision for a more competent and better-paid professional staff. And if the decline in membership is accompanied by a clearer vision of the real tasks of the church and of the functions of its leadership it is probable that a much smaller group of people will be able to exercise a more powerful moral and spiritual influence upon society. Christians, according to Friedländer, did not constitute as much as ten per cent of the population when Constantine made his alliance with the Church as the one force that could save his empire.

VI

As for the effect upon organized Christianity as a whole and upon the moral and spiritual tone of society, of the impersonal aspects of modern business, its uniformities and specializations, and its measurement of success in terms of profit, everything depends upon two factors. One is the development of social statesmanship on the part of the leaders of our business-science civilization. The other is the discovery on the part of organized Christianity of what its function is and of the means and methods which are essential to its performance.

Of the development of larger vision on the part of our business leaders which will enable them to direct their activities with an eye to their social utility we have reasons to be hopeful. We have little sympathy with those who are constantly bemoaning the fact that they are living in a civilization where the business class is dominant. We greatly prefer living in this civilization to living in one dominated by either a hereditary aristocracy or a priesthood. The quest of business men for power is no more ardent than similar quests in history on the part of nobles and ecclesiastics. The "profit" test of success, moreover, is no more inhuman than the tests involved in the "saintliness" of a Simeon Stylites or in the slaughtering efficiency of a Front de Bœuf and his fellow barons. And our "wage slaves" who, instead of listening to jazz over the radio, might have sung in the choruses of Sophocles? Yes. But are we sure that they would not have been working in chains and under whip in the silver mines at Laureion? And the Dempsey-Tunney fight would have outdrawn the *Œdipus Tyrannus* even in the Athens of Sophocles.

No, we cannot go back either to the Middle Ages or to the classic age of Greece. And we doubt whether, if we knew all the facts about those ages, we should wish to do so. Meanwhile we live in an age when for good or for ill the business class occupies the most strategic position as far as effecting changes in our culture are concerned. Why do we believe that those changes may be directed by business men increasingly from motives of social utility rather than from motives of immediate profit?

One of our reasons for so believing lies in the discovery by business men themselves that, while there is a great range of impersonal relationship in business, ultimately business must reckon with its personal results. Sooner or later the manager has to face the question of how his products benefit the consumer and of how his methods of organization affect the interest and loyalty of the workers. Hence the cult of service in business, the widening distribution of stock ownership, the maintenance of buying power in the consuming public by high wages, the endeavor to make advertising trustworthy, and the standardizing of quality so that the customer can rely upon the merchandise that he buys, even though he is at a vast remove from the manufacturer, just as if he had bought it in face-to-face relations with a mediæval guildsman. Business finds, when impersonality is extended too far, a law of diminishing returns. Man has behind him a history of hundreds of thousands of years of personal existence, and the machine cannot write off the obligations we have incurred to treat one another ultimately as persons even in the most mechanized relationships of life.

Another reason for believing in the growth of social statesmanship on the part of business leaders is based upon their experience as trustees in various philanthropic and educational enterprises. In these relationships business men are giving much of their time to non-profit-making activities in connection with great social interests which in their scope and complexity are much like business organizations. This experience of trusteeship is affecting the attitude of some business men toward their own business. They are discovering the fascination of operating great enterprises under the urge of other motives than those of profit, and while profit must remain as at least a mechanical check upon the economies of business, there are those in the business world who are beginning to feel in their daily life the lure of the vision of a more adequate social organization for the advancement of mankind.

The men who feel this most are those who appreciate the strategic position in which the modern business class finds itself. Here it stands, in alliance with science, between man and the great resources of nature. Most of the discoveries of natural science which are able to release man from toil and to set him free for the larger creative use of his life pass through the hands of business. If redemption is, as we have viewed it, a realistic affair, involving the organization of nature and man into a higher order which man has conceived at first only in ideal, then business must play a large part in that process. Business men, accordingly, may be and must be as truly the mediators of the grace of God as any clergyman who stands in the apostolic succession. To those of us who believe that the process of revelation and redemption is a democratic process, this conception brings no qualms.

The results of the alliance of business with science and its growing consciousness of its strategic position in the process of human advancement are beginning to be reflected in the increase of large-scale planning throughout our culture. The nonchalant confidence in whatever makes money is not quite so universal as it was. Business leaders are realizing more and more the value of the kind of planning which is a coöperative affair, which embodies long views and which takes account of other factors and goals than that of immediate profit. In fact, the greatest plans which are being developed by business leaders today are those which involve changing the outlook on life of whole groups of human beings and of establishing them in a new status as participants in the business process.

It was to planning of that kind that Mr. Owen D. Young challenged his *confrères* in his address delivered at the dedication of the new buildings of the Harvard Graduate School of Business Administration. Speaking of the possible approach of an era when those who labor in an industry will hire the capital employed in it instead of being hired by it, he said:

> I hope the day may come when these great business organizations will truly belong to the men who are giving their lives and their efforts to them, I care not in what capacity. Then they will use capital truly as a tool and they will be all interested in working it to the highest economic advantage. Then an idle machine will mean to every man in the plant who sees it an unproductive charge against himself. Then every piece of material not in motion will mean to the man who sees it an unproductive charge against himself. Then we shall have zest in labor, provided the leadership is competent and the division fair. Then we shall dispose, once and for all, of the

charge that in industry organizations are autocratic and not democratic. Then we shall have all the opportunities for a cultural wage which the business can provide. Then, in a word, men will be as free in coöperative undertakings and subject only to the same limitations and chances as men in individual businesses. Then we shall have no hired men. That objective may be a long way off, but it is worthy to engage the research and efforts of the Harvard School of Business.[10]

Such words incline us to believe that between the far-visioned capitalism of Owen D. Young and the hard-headed socialism of Ramsay MacDonald there is probably no impassable gulf. The areas of coöperation which lie between them are traversable and inviting. And the progress of mankind with a maximum of real gain and a minimum of wasteful conflict depends upon our following the Youngs and the MacDonalds into those areas.

When I think of these words of Mr. Young and of the imaginative grasp of human affairs which inspired them I am reminded of what one of the members of the DeBeers Company said to Cecil Rhodes when the latter insisted upon putting into the deed of trust the provision that the company should have the power to acquire territory and form an empire. "You have queer ideas," the partner said.

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[10] Young, "Dedication Address," *Harvard Business Review,* vol. v, p. 392.

"Some people have a fancy for this thing and some for that thing, but you have a fancy for making an empire. Well, I suppose we must give in to you, but it isn't business." [11]

No, not business in the narrow sense of the word, the prevalent, still dominant sense, we regret to say, business which sees and aims at no objectives beyond its own gains. With Rhodes, however, business was for the sake of empire. And with Mr. Young we suspect that business exists for the sake of another empire, an empire of creative coöperative humanity. It exists to usher in a new stage in the evolution of man.

The influence of such leadership is another reason for being hopeful of the development of social statesmanship by our business-science culture.

It is difficult to see, moreover, how the traditional *laissez-faire* philosophy of business can withstand the pressure of the many forces which are increasing the complexity and interdependence of every aspect of life in the modern world. The fabric of prosperity grows ever more delicate. The skill and intelligence involved in fitting the various parts of our industrial machine together become ever more important. The wastes of conflict appear ever more glaring. The urge in education, international relations, and religion toward a genuinely coöperative life is growing.

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[11] MacDonald, *Life of Cecil Rhodes,* p. 82.

If the development of business statesmanship characterized by large-scale planning for objectives other than those of private profit does not result from the increasing interdependence of our life in capitalistic society, it would seem that it must be ultimately forced by the fact of Russia. Under the flag of the Soviet government there live today one hundred and fifty million people and it is quite possible that in a few generations that population will grow to three hundred millions. Russia dominates eastern Europe and central and northern Asia. No human power is in position to break its hold in that territory. Russia is experimenting with an entirely different form of government from those which are approved in the West. Her economic system in spirit and structure is radically hostile to this capitalistic business culture of ours. But the Russian government, with all its defects, is revealing a capacity for large-scale planning in which the goals set up—such as the development and transmission of power, the training of an adequate supply of technicians, the raising of popular standards of health and literacy—are goals of social utility and not those of private profit. If the Russian people make tangible progress toward the realization of these goals under the Soviet régime, it is inconceivable that similar large-scale planning will not be stimulated enormously throughout Western civilization.

Thus we believe that it is entirely possible that by the sheer pressure of the forces within our own culture, material and ideal, as well as by the competition of the alien culture of Russia, we shall be led to govern the activities of our machines by considerations which are somewhat more congenial to the Christian interpretation of life in terms of fellowship than the goals of private profit which have so largely influenced the times in which we live.

The area of dominance, moreover, to go back to Professor Child's illustration, is possibly shifting. It is no longer completely identical with the economic-technological. It seems to be overlapping the area of human relations. In the application of science to the achievement of happiness and richness of experience in those relations we are as yet on the edge of an unknown country. A new group of leaders will probably emerge who will show us how to live, not by having more things, but by doing without the things we do not need. There may be a more profound wisdom in the ancient declaration that life is more than meat and the body than raiment, than an age which could only understand success, when attained by making things at a profit, would allow.

If organized Christianity could use its vast forces to discover once more and in terms of our civilization what "life" requires and how "life can attain mastery over things," it would be revealing a quality of statesmanship similar to that which it asks of the leaders of business. In our opinion the pivotal question, "Can Christianity endure our machine culture?" will be answered quite largely by Christians themselves—answered by the kind of religion with which they face the world.

Can we set our own house in order, understand our needs, determine our objectives, and follow the ways that promise insight?

The value and the power of religion are revealed by the strength of the resistance which it overcomes; by the range of the secular interests which it transmutes; and its authority is complete only when it is recognized by the free.

—JONES, *A Faith that Enquires*, p. 31.

Who is left among you that saw this house in its former glory? And how do ye see it now? is it not in your eyes as nothing?

Yet now be strong . . . saith the Lord . . . and work: for I am with you.

For thus saith the Lord of hosts: yet once it is a little while and I will shake the heavens, and the earth, and the sea and the dry land; and I will shake all nations; and the precious things of all nations shall come; and I will fill this house with glory, saith the Lord of hosts.

The latter glory of this house shall be greater than the former saith the Lord of hosts and in this place will I give peace.

—HAGGAI.

Chapter Ten

NEW ASPECTS OF OLD TASKS

"The hunger for brotherhood is at the bottom of the unrest of the modern civilized world." Thus George Frederick Watts interpreted the meaning of the turbulent currents which were sweeping the institutions of his day from their moorings into the maelstrom of universal change. The wistfulness of which the great Victorian artist was aware has not lessened during the quarter of a century which has elapsed since his death. It is, if anything, deeper and more poignant. In spite of Count Keyserling's pessimism, ours is not an irreligious generation. There is a longing for some central certainty, for some worthy object to which men may devote their lives. And beneath all our separations and antagonisms there is a latent feeling that we need one another and that we are potentially worthy of mutual understanding and of love if we only knew how to express that half-conscious conviction.

I suppose that the author has written as he has because he shares this wistfulness. He feels that our civilization with its teeming problems, its cross-currents, its trivialities, its sinister forces and immeasurable perils, has at its heart a divine hunger. And it is because this hunger has proved to be unappeasable in the vagrant dispersed life that modern individuals lead, that men feel that in some way or other this complex and fragmentary existence of theirs must find an organ of spiritual expression. "Ah," you say, "they will come back to the church." Hardly "come back." But they may go forward to a church if they can find some organized religion which will at once carry them out into the full sweep of the world's movement and yet give them that inner sense of direction by which they may maintain their integrity and hold their course to a worthy goal.

I

What do these individuals who crave a church capable of being the spiritual organ of our culture seek in it?

First of all they seek an outlook upon the world which is unified in a central life-directing faith. They crave

Some Universal under which may fall
The minor premiss of our effort small,

> In Whose unending Purpose, though we cease
> We find our impulse and our only peace.[1]

They crave a faith which will give them a cause, through allegiance to which they may find themselves both whole and free. To survey in preliminary fashion the materials which may possibly enter into such a faith has been the purpose of this book.

In a church such as we contemplate men seek also a view of civilization which distinguishes those trends with which they may ally themselves from the trends which they must oppose. Such a church would possess a social philosophy which could guide the experimental efforts of its members in industry, politics, racial and international relationships, to realize in their personal careers and in society as a whole the ideals of their religion. The church itself would have no corporate capacity for working out specific remedies for our social ills. But it would have an inalienable responsibility for helping men to envision goals and to undertake risks in their respective vocations on the assumption that their primary faith was practicable as a way of life.

To such a church, moreover, men would come for guidance in developing a discipline of personal living in "the great society," a discipline which would draw on the resources and methods of science to discover how the life of noblest quality may continue to develop in the midst of an order which threatens its growth. A discipline of personal living is essential if we are not to drift with the tide of specialized and dispersed interests which tends to destroy all coherence of life-purpose and all inward control.

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[1] Lines by Henry Newbolt, quoted in Younghusband *The Light of Experience*, p. 221.

We know also that men crave in the church an experience of worship in which they may fulfill the conditions of widening vision and of the loftiest self-dedication, an experience in which the incentives which make possible the disciplined life may be continuously renewed at a fountain head of spiritual energy.

And finally, in any church where the constructive tendencies and desires of civilization are brought together and focused on great goals of human fulfillment there will be the note of reality, of correspondence between faith and practice. In a church which enshrines the principle of Christian fellowship, for instance, power would be shared by the many rather than monopolized by the few, comradeship would be warm, the outreach to the unprivileged classes and races of our world would be fraternal rather than paternal, and the ecclesiastical institution itself would constantly test its own structure and relationships by the ideals which it is engaged in commending to business leaders and statesmen.

A unified faith, a social philosophy, a discipline of personal living, a method of worship in which the men of our time may participate with their entire natures, the consciousness of a sincere purpose on the part of the religious institution to bring its corporate life into accord with its faith, these are the satisfactions that men crave in a church capable of becoming the spiritual organ of civilization. The provision of these satisfactions constitutes the various tasks of the existing church in our time.

These tasks are all old tasks. As far as Christianity is concerned, they have confronted the Church in every age of its existence. And the Church has advanced or retrograded according as it has performed these tasks well or ill. All of these tasks engaged the attention of the great apostle to the Gentiles at the very beginning of the Christian era. He labored incessantly with his Jewish hearers to help them recast their inherited faith into forms congenial to the new belief in Jesus as the Messiah. In *Romans* and *Ephesians* he traces the outlines of a philosophy of history, describing the great world purpose which has been marching amid all the events of the past since the creation. In sermons and in the ethical sections of his letters he counsels his converts as to the specific conditions of Christian living amid the allurements of a pagan environment. The "life" has already become a "way." In *Corinthians* he is engaged in improving the Church's services of worship. And always and everywhere he brings every phase of the Church's life into comparison with the standards which we have in Christ, an inescapable challenge to the Church's sincerity. Our tasks were originally Paul's.

And the great Christian personalities and the creative movements of Christian history have always been engrossed with these tasks. In the introduction to this book we have referred to notable achievements of coherent structures of faith. Augustine, Dante, the reformers of the sixteenth and the English Christian socialists of the nineteenth century all knew that religion involved a philosophy of society. The Puritans in the seventeenth and the Methodists in the eighteenth century developed a discipline of personal life. The Quakers and the Salvation Army, as well as the Anglo-Catholics, have been concerned with forms of worship fitted to human needs. The Franciscans and the apostles of modern missions have alike borne upon their souls the burden of the contrast between the Church's profession and its practice. The tasks which challenge the Church today are the perennial tasks of vital religion.

The tasks are old, but there are novel elements in their prosecution amid the changes of the modern world. These elements, as far as conditions of thought are concerned, seem to be twofold. There is first a growing appreciation that all the processes of personal and social life are involved in the work of human redemption. The organic view of nature may pass, but a sense of the interrelationship of the diverse influences which affect man's fulfillment of his destiny will remain, just as the conviction that there is an order of nature survives all the shocks which threaten the permanence of the Newtonian physics.

Second, there is the growing importance of intelligence. The complexity of modern life has increased the significance of intelligence in every realm. It is not less so in religion. The tasks of religion, as those of business and statesmanship, require the whole of the modern man, his skills, his arts, and his powers of organization. The spiritual organ of this civilization must be in it and of it in order to focus and transmute it. And as the factor of intelligence becomes more important in civilization as a whole it will become more important in shaping and accomplishing the tasks of religion.

II

But the most significant aspect of all these tasks of the Church in our time is both old and new. It may be illustrated by the process of developing a new city plan. The city of Rochester, N. Y., has been recently going through the throes of this undertaking. For generations the city, like Topsy, had just grown. No central well-coördinated scheme prophetic of the future had directed its expansion. As a result it had over 1,700 dead-end streets (which led nowhere) and jogs, which impeded the traffic with which the motor age had overwhelmed it. Without a plan it could not go on. It would be strangled to suffocation if the ancient highways were left undisturbed. The new city plan uses every existing street that it is possible to use. Many are left undisturbed. Some are to be widened. Many disconnected streets are to be united. Some entirely new streets are to be put through. But all the changes of whatever nature are to be governed by certain fundamental principles of city planning and the control of traffic present and future, which have been derived from the broadest experience of urban life.

So with the tasks of the Church in our time. The most important aspect of these tasks is that of discovering in our religious experience certain great principles of spiritual growth, so confirmed by the evidence of the ages, so needed by the age in which we live, so satisfying to the inner cravings of our hearts that they are capable of giving unity and direction to all of these undertakings in which we are engaged. As we live and work under the guidance of these principles we shall find that, like the streets, some inherited conceptions must be broadened (and some abandoned). Others must be brought into new relationships, while still others will represent novel insights of our own day.

A recent writer has suggested that every great reformation or revival of Christianity has been marked by the emergence of some central truth or principle of the historic faith which has cracked the shell of orthodoxy and allowed the living elements to escape from bondage to the obsolete.[2] So the Franciscans took as their text: "Provide neither gold nor silver . . . for your journey"; the followers of Luther, "The just shall live by faith"; the Friends, "The Kingdom of God is within you"; the pioneers of the modern missionary enterprise, "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature." In all of these ventures of the Christian spirit you may note the influence of central principles in clarifying the tasks of the Church.

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[2] Wood, H. G., *Living Issues in Religious Thought,* p. 133 f.

Is it not evident that in the various movements of contemporary Christianity there is a growing consciousness of the centrality of the principle of fellowship, which we have discerned in this book as one of the basic insights of Jesus? Its general aspects Henry Drummond, Toyohiko Kagawa, Bishop Brent, Canon Raven, Basil Mathews, Henry Churchill King, Rufus Jones, and many others have interpreted. Walter Rauschenbusch, Harry Ward, Kirby Page, and Charles A. Ellwood have applied it to social issues. Charles C. Morrison, Peter Ainslie, and the Federal Council group have sought its embodiment in the relations of the churches to one another. *The Inquiry,* under the leadership of E. C. Carter, has begun a promising investigation into the practical conditions, social and psychological, which are essential to its realization in situations of conflict. Henry Nelson Wieman has started to explore the possibilities of applying scientific method to the inner life of fellowship with God. The student and industrial departments of the Y. W. C. A. have pioneered in developing contacts between separated groups. The Stockholm and Lausanne Conferences and the World's Christian Student Movements with their various gatherings are evidences of a similar interest.

The community church, the inter-racial commissions, the inter-confessional meetings at various universities, and many activities entirely outside the churches are manifestations of the same impulse.

The issue which we now face in the Church is this. Can we make explicit as an organizing force in the clarification and prosecution of our tasks, a principle which is the half-conscious assumption of all these interests and activities which we have mentioned? Can we utilize all the resources of science, the urges and cravings of our time, the age-long incentives and assured insights of religion to give the spirit of fellowship a body of belief and practice which will enable the Church to progressively unify our world by the mastery of the conditions of the brotherly life? To a Church capable of meeting this issue in a heroic way men would come to discover the possibilities of their world, and the meaning of their individual lives.

Of the decisiveness of this issue no one has spoken with greater emphasis than Bishop Gore. In a remarkable address delivered in England a few years ago this distinguished churchman said: "It is quite certain that the religion which Jesus Christ brought into the world was to be a religion of a great human fellowship in which men were to be able to see the principles of brotherhood actually embodied." Going on to speak of those who had this idea of what

Christianity is and of those who had it not, the Bishop added: "The division runs right across all the denominations in a way that anyone who thinks that genuine Christianity means what I think it means, finds himself, whatever his doctrinal principles, brought into real and actual fellowship wholly irrespective of denominational differences, and finds his warmest allies, here with a Roman Catholic, there with a Unitarian, there with all sorts of people who belong to all sorts and divisions of Christendom." [3]

III

For Protestantism in particular this issue seems to be decisive because there is now in Protestantism only the slightest consciousness of any confident organizing principle of growth. Catholicism rests solidly upon the principle of an absolute, living, objective authority and there are many persons caught in the moral and spiritual welter of our time who sacrifice other desires and needs and cling to the Catholic Church because it offers them the certainty that they crave.

Protestantism continues because of the great values which it embodies as a going concern which we pointed out in the last chapter. But these values are

[3] From a stenographic report of the Eddy Seminar (1925).

quite different from organizing principles of advancement. And the two original Protestant principles are not as significant in our present world situation as they were in the sixteenth century. The principle of an infallible Biblical authority, for instance, was useful once as a weapon in the conflict for human freedom against the authority of the Church and the religious authority of the monarch. But its usefulness is now hopelessly impaired by modern knowledge. It can never regain the position it once occupied in Protestantism. It is now in process of being transmuted into a more inclusive principle—the authority of Christian experience. We are already witnessing the rapid fulfillment of Professor McGiffert's prophecy of fifteen years ago: "There can be little question that the Protestant doctrine of an infallible and self-interpreting Bible is bound to disappear from the minds of thinking men long before the Catholic doctrine of an infallible Church." [4]

The other and more radical principle of Protestantism, the principle of individual liberty, had striking cogency in an age when men were revolting against an overshadowing religious institution which was united to and largely invested with the powers of the state. That age is past. We are living in another age when revolt has become a convention, when the dangers of spiritual poverty and despair incident to the life of the individual who is devoid of institutional religious support are growing ever more serious. We are realizing, moreover, that the ancient antithesis, the individual *versus* the institution, is a false one. We know now that if we desire unique individuals with rich and varied natures, we must rear them not in solitudes and in narrow associations, but in societies with manifold and complex relationships. We have become aware that those religious communions are most rich in spiritual possibilities which place the greatest variety of individual expression and achievement at the disposal of all. Hence the modern demand for an "inclusive" Church.

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[4] McGiffert, *The Rise of Modern Religious Ideas,* p. 284.

The principle of fellowship thoroughly worked out and organically realized will enable Protestantism to conserve the results of its historic individualism and continue with confidence its mission in the world. It will lead us in our personal life away from the self-centeredness which a highly individualized outlook tends to produce and make us tolerant and humble before the religious achievements of others. It will open up alluring problems of research, offering a way forward in religion in which we may count upon the fullest coöperation of science. It will freshen the atmosphere of stuffy ecclesiastical structures which smother inquiry and condone equivocation, and will even transform these structures themselves from theological museums into arsenals and fortresses from which unredeemed areas of the world's life may be invaded.

And to some of us at least, the principle of fellowship has already brought a sense of inward peace and certainty. Not that peace and certainty perhaps which characterize saints or apostles. Such serenity can only be attained by those who have experienced a radical conversion to a new order or who have never left the old. Only after men have become thoroughly at home in a new world of assumptions which are present unconsciously in all their thinking will such an assured faith become possible. The certainty to which we may aspire is rather that of the explorer who is drawn on by truth and love, of the warrior who fights for causes which mean richer life for men. Such a certainty we may have, for in the life of growing fellowship we know that we are out on the great spiritual highway of the ages and that our leader is the incomparable one who found fellowship with Samaritans and outcasts, publicans and sinners. Once more we are discovering that "perfect love casteth out fear," even the fear of the colossal doubts which today intimidate the souls of men.

A vast fellowship of the free, deriving its primary inspiration from the concrete experiences of Jesus and his followers, seeking to actualize the profound implications of those experiences in the thought and life of our time, living by a principle which involves the continuing revelation of God—such is the possible destiny of Protestantism.

Protestants with a "catholic" spirit, and liberal Catholics, moreover, will be increasingly drawn by this principle into a mutual exchange of experiences. "God has great surprises in store. The Reformation is not by any means the last word He has spoken. We may confidently look and hope for something better than Romanism and Protestantism. And free America, where all the Churches are commingling and rivaling with each other, may yet become the chief theater of such a reunion of Christendom as will preserve every truly Christian and valuable element in the various types which it has assumed in the course of ages and make them more effective than they were in their separation and antagonism."[5]

When organized Christianity in its various expressions begins to ask what fellowship with God requires; when it seeks to discover how individual and group differences may be used for the enrichment of a common life; when it begins to assume that there is no phase of our existence which is alien to our

[5] Schaff, *Church and State in the United States,* p. 83.

religion, but that the divine order on earth is nothing other than the complete life of man so organized that the achievement of each is made accessible in its benefits to all—then indeed we shall be upon the highroad of promise. And not until organized Christianity in a really serious way undertakes such a venture have we a right to believe that this great principle at the heart of our historic religion is incapable of practical realization. To the highroad of such a venture we are impelled by the religious outlook which we have described.

IV

To those who have followed the author in the pilgrimage which the reading as well as the writing of this book has involved may I say this final word.

The issues which we have been discussing seem to us the pivotal issues in the conflict between secularism and historic Christianity. This conflict has produced a cultural cleavage in Western civilization. We have in our present society two orders of life whose assumptions as to the meaning of our existence seem to the outward view mutually exclusive. The contact between these two cultures is producing a tremendous amount of disintegration, particularly in the sphere of religion. A new Dark Age, some tell us, is coming on, to be characterized by spiritual anarchy, interrupted only occasionally by weak and futile efforts to regain the essentials of a worthy and coherent life.

It is possible that we are on the threshold of an age when the unexamined life which Socrates found not worth the living will be the only life which a hurried secularism will allow. But whatever may happen to these prophecies, this much is clear—the years which lie before us constitute for Christianity a period of conflict such as it has not known for centuries. Christianity has never been easy to believe or to practice. And we are entering upon a time when its belief in many polite circles will be pronounced childish and its practice absurd.

In such a time Christians will realize, even as in the first centuries, that they represent merely one type of Western man. There will be Stoics of the laboratory, studying, manipulating, and enduring the order of nature. There will be refined Cyrenaics distilling from life by the most sophisticated methods the last drop of pleasure. There will be a great mass of worldlings intent upon satisfying the senses and winning the game of "profit." All of these will mingle in the market-place and in the intimacies of social intercourse.

Under such circumstances the future of Christianity as a religion of historic integrity will depend upon whether the Christian can become once more what he has been in the great ages of his history, one who lives in his world by virtue of a faith which reaches beyond it, who chooses Christ against the world, who sees in the midst of his way a "cross," and who counts upon a God who reveals Himself and redeems man through suffering.

If Christianity will accept the challenge of secularism not as a summons to dig itself in as a religion of escape from a world that has baffled it, but as a summons to growth in inner integrity as well as in the power to assimilate the nobler tendencies of the secular order, then the new spiritual age of which we have been thinking in these pages may become indeed a reality. Such an age will be accompanied by much bewilderment, by an acquiescence in crude and immediate satisfactions, while the great ends of life remain obscure. But a more adequate faith will be on the way. It may come slowly, as the vision of the Gothic came to the forest-minded men of northern Europe in the Middle Ages, the vision of a temple where sunlight through foliage had become traceries of glass, where trees had become pillars and intertwining branches the groined arches above cathedral aisles. So the thrust of spiritual longing will carry up the materials of a great tradition, together with novel elements of modern experience, to form the arches of a new temple of faith for the souls of men.

Whether or not such an age is actually in prospect it is apparent that Christianity in our time is no longer a casual affair. With the coming of such pivotal issues as have been before us we pass from the trenches of established belief into the open warfare characteristic of the attempt to discover and defend more adequate conceptions of faith. The risks are great, but the stakes are beyond all reckoning, for only as such conceptions are secured will Western civilization achieve again a unified spiritual outlook, and the division in the souls of modern men be healed.

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